IN NATURE'S GARDEN

Mrs Gordon
Mrs McCulloch

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Uniform with this book:

IN FRIENDSHIP'S GARDEN
IN FRIENDSHIP'S NAME
JOYS OF THE GARDEN
THE CHARM OF ENGLAND
THE CONTENTED MIND
THE JOYS OF LIFE
THE PLEASURES OF BOOKLAND
WHAT MAKES A FRIEND

IN NATURE'S GARDEN

COMPILED BY

JOSEPH SHAYLOR

These Gardens of Poetry! and through the midst of them flows the broad stream of Memory, isled with fair lilied lawns, fringed with willowy forests and whispering reeds. And not less beautiful than these ideal shades are the gardens which live unchanged and unchanging in many a painted picture within the heart.

E. V. B.

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THIS VOLUME

IS

Dedicated

IN ALL SINCERITY

TO EVERY LOVER

OF THE

TRUE AND BEAUTIFUL

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INTRODUCTION

LITERATURE may be defined as the interpretation of life, Nature as the unification of life. It can be taken as a truism that the highest in Literature, as in Nature, represents that which is paramount in both the intellectual and physical worlds.

Nature, however, unlike much in literature, is real; whether seen in its highest, or lowest, form, it is always true to its conditions; in contemplating its most perfect productions, one feels to be in touch with the Infinite.

The True is the Beautiful; Nature is true, therefore beautiful. The many-sided truths of Nature show its many-sided beauties. Whenever this cosmos becomes evident to our senses its influence is of a soul-elevating character.

The beautiful in Nature, whether it be seen in the external forms of matter, or associated in the harmonies of light, shade, and colour, or whether it be conveyed in the modulations of sweet sounds, develops the natural genius and prompts the theme of the Poet, and it often becomes the chosen study of the Philosopher. Whenever Poets describe Nature's varying mood, they have been inspired by some truth they wish to express.

This idea is happily described by Maeterlinck :—

> There is nothing puerile in nature; and he who becomes impassioned of a flower, a blade of grass, a butterfly's wing, a nest, a shell, wraps his passion round a small thing that always contains a great truth.

There are some whose moods and dispositions find their highest enjoyment in being alone with Nature; when all the boisterous elements of a restless world are asleep, then her voice awakens in the receptive soul that sympathetic peace which passeth understanding.

Lord Byron, in "Childe Harold," beautifully expressed this feeling in the following passage :—

There is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes
By the deep sea, and music in its roar:
I love not man the less but Nature more
From these our interviews, in which I steal
From all I may be, or have been before,
To mingle with the Universe and feel
What I can ne'er express, yet cannot all reveal.

It is this restful power in Nature which exercises such a wonderful influence, making the soul responsive to its voice, and which in silence finds its manifestation.

It is difficult to realize that there are souls so dead that they cannot respond to the glories of Nature—the rising or the setting sun, the magnificent expanse of the boundless ocean, the forest shattered by the storm or made harmonious with the singing of birds; none of these—nor any other revelation of Nature, be they ever so beautiful—can touch a single chord in their dull souls.

It is alone with Nature, and often in some desert place apart, that great thoughts and noble actions have been inspired, which in their results have had lasting effects upon

the world. How frequently do we read that teachers of ancient times retired to the mountains, to the high hills and groves, and even to the solitary plains, that they might, in communion with Nature, absorb new power and fresh strength into their lives.

The results from this secret intercourse with Nature have had effects upon humanity wholly unforeseen, even by those who gave them expression. It is one of the strongly marked characteristics of the writings of the Ancient Hebrews, beginning with the great Hymn of Creation, down to the Poets, Psalmists, and Prophets, who in their most lofty ideals drew their illustrations from Nature and its wonders.

So also in the literature of the Greeks and Romans, we have many beautiful poetic ideals which must have been prompted by the fascinating influence of Nature upon those writers.

Take, for example, the following extract from a translation of the Roman Poet Virgil, which displays a flight into the realms of Nature-Poetry of a very high order:—

'Twas night; on earth all creatures were asleep:
Midway the stars moved silent through the spheres,
Hushed were the forests and the angry deep,
And hushed was every field, and far and near
Reigned stillness and the night spread calm and clear.

The flocks, the birds, with painted plumage gay,
That haunt the copse, or dwell in brake and brere,
Or skim the liquid lakes—all silent lay,
Lapt in oblivion sweet, forgetful of the day.

It is interesting to contrast the similarity which exists between the various classifications of life and of Nature; and although nothing is lost in the economy of the universe, yet birth and death, change and decay, ebb and flow, govern and control every living thing; animal life has its childhood, youth, manhood, and old age, or their equivalents. The circling year calls into being the numerous variations in vegetable life; its spring of existence leads to its summer of beauty, followed by the fruition of autumn and the winter of decay.

As Shakespeare, with sagely wisdom, wrote, "One touch of Nature makes the whole world kin."

In the literature of Poetry and of the Drama, Nature finds its most intellectual interpretation.

Seldom has the responsive mind of the poet been more clearly revealed, than by the Author of "God the Beautiful," in the following eloquent passage:—

> The poet loves Nature in all her aspects—in the smiling valleys, in shady woods and groves, and in the purling streams. He listens with delight to the soft breezes, to the murmurs of the rills, to the sweet carols of birds as they fill the air with melody. He admires Nature in her humbler aspects—in the delicate moss on the crumbling wall, the tiny wild flower that lifts its head from beneath the sheltering hedge, as well as her most aristocratic stately sisters in the parterre of the great garden.

This Poetic Nature-loving appears to be one of the principal signs of civilization. In rude and barbarous times, the changing elements were looked upon as signs of anger or of pleasure in the Deity worshipped, but in all civilized ages the worship of, and delight in Nature, has been one of the most marked attributes; and this admiration has voiced itself in the poetic geniuses of those periods.

In our own Country there are many examples of Nature-inspired productions of the Old Anglo-Saxons, and in the Middle Ages we

have in Chaucer's "Canterbury Tales" some charming touches of Nature. It was, however, in the Elizabethan Age that Nature's Poets sang some of their most harmonious lays. What can be richer in tone than much which was written by Shakespeare, Marlow, Herrick, and others of that period?

This Nature-Poetry was continued in our glorious Milton, whose melody has touched the hearts and charmed the imaginations of the people from his own time onwards. But it was not until the latter half of the Eighteenth Century that Nature-Poetry was completely awakened in this Country; at that time we had many famous in Literature writing under the influence of Nature's wondrous power. Irresistibly the name of Wordsworth comes up as one of Nature's great illuminators; with Coleridge, Thomson, Cowper, Scott, Byron and others: these form a galaxy of poetic worthies whose names will ever live as some of Nature's greatest interpreters. The influence of these powerful writers has been ever increasing, and many Poets of the past and present century have combined to carry on the bequests of these great Immortals.

One of the forces which has attracted attention to the study of the beauties of Nature during the last half of the Nineteenth Century, has been Science. The faculty which combines enthusiasm with study has advanced with unerring strides, and has permeated every region of Nature in its intense desire for origin and truth. The microscope has helped to forward this pursuit after knowledge, and is only one of the many agencies that has aided Nature study; this faculty has also created a craving for the scientific unfolding of much in Nature which before was unknown and unimagined.

This love of Nature has not only vivified our poetry, but in all branches of literature its effect is recognizable; even in volumes of travel, more consideration is given now to the beauties of the countries described; and the sentimental, prose rhapsodies about landscapes in the fiction of past days have given way to a more literary and poetic blending of the realities and delights of Nature.

It has been the desire of the compiler of this volume of gems of Nature-Poetry, to bring

together, in an informal manner, a few of the riches from our Nature writers, a perusal of which it is hoped will lead readers to drink deeper from this great well-spring of English literature.

As the nosegay often looks more beautiful when the flowers are not arranged for artistic effect, so the poems here collected are not placed in any classified or critical order, but are simply a collection of poems or extracts which may be considered as a presentation of some of the perfect specimens from the vast garden of our Nature-loving Poets.

The compiler is under deep obligation to numerous Authors, Publishers, and holders of copyrights, by whom he has been allowed to draw from their treasure stores, and for this courtesy he is greatly indebted. To all these he begs to tender his most sincere and heartfelt thanks for their kindness and consideration; and if in the accompanying list there be any from whom he may not have obtained special permission for using a particular poem, he hopes the fault will be condoned and that this expression of thanks may be considered sufficient.

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JOSEPH SHAYLOR.

In Nature's Garden

IN the garden to and fro,
Fluting low, thrushes go.

In the garden we can spy,
Circling high, swallows fly.

In the garden all a-blow
Row on row roses grow.

In the garden when we meet
Life is sweet and complete.

Maria Steuart

SOFT sunshine, and the sound
Of old forests echoing round,
And the light and smell divine
Of all flowers that breathe and shine—
All may live so happy there.

P. B. Shelley

WEEP no more, heart of my heart, no more!
The night has passed and the dawn is here,
The cuckoo calls from the budding trees,
And tells us that Spring is near.

Sorrow no more, beloved, no more!
For see, sweet emblem of hope untold,
The tears that soft on the shamrocks fall
There turn to blossoms of gold.

Winter has gone with his blighting breath,
No more to chill thee with cold or fear,
The brook laughs loud in its liberty,
Green buds on the hedge appear.

Weep no more, life of my heart, no more!
The birds are carolling sweet and clear;
The warmth of Summer is in the breeze,
And the Spring—the Spring is here.

Dora Sigerson Shorter

I PRAY to you whom God gives gardens, lend
This happy solace which the flowers bestow;
Where pain oppresses, and where few befriend
To cheer their suffering, and to soothe their woe.

Anon.

WHAT was Summer chanting?
O ye brooks and birds,
Flash and pipe in happiness
Stirring hearts that cares oppress
Into shining words!
Here's a maze of butterflies
Dancing over golden gorse,
Here's a host of grassy spies
Sunshine has set free, of course!
Wonder at the wind that blows
Odours from the forest sweet;
Marvel at the honied rose
Heaping petals at her feet;
Hark at wood-nymphs rustling through
Brakes and thickets, tender knee'd!
Hark! some shepherd pipe there blew!
Was it Pan upon a reed?
Oh, the pinks and garden-spice,
Nature's ev'ry fair device,
Mingled in a scented hoard
Expected, longed for and adored—
Summer's come!

Norman Gale

AND dreaming, some of autumn past,
And some of spring approaching fast,
And some of April buds and showers,
And some of songs in July bowers,
And all of love. *P. B. Shelley*

IT was the cooling hour, just when the rounded
Red sun sinks down behind the azure hill,
Which then seems as if the whole earth it bounded
Circling all nature, hush'd, and dim, and still,
While the far mountain-crescent half surrounded
On one side, and the deep sea, calm and chill,
Upon the other, and the rosy sky,
With one star sparkling through it like an eye.

Lord Byron

FRESH fields and woods! the Earth's fair face! . . .
I ask not why the first believer
Did love to be a country liver,
Where he might view his boundless sky,
And all those glorious lights on high:
Subjected hills, trees, meads, and flowers:
And every minute bless the King
And wise Creator of each thing. . . .
If Eden be on Earth at all,
'Tis that which we the country call.

Henry Vaughan

BEHOLD! the hill-tops all aglow
With purple and with amethyst;
While the whole valley deep below
Is filled, and seems to overflow,
With a fast-rising tide of mist.
The evening air grows damp and chill;
Let us go in.

Ah, not so soon.
See yonder fire! It is the moon
Slow rising o'er the eastern hill.
It glimmers on the forest tips,
And through the dewy foliage drips
In little rivulets of light,
And makes the heart in love with night.

H. W. Longfellow

THE splendours of the summer-time are done,
And, though the roses linger for a space,
Soon they will fade on paths and garden ways.
The russet leaves lie thickly, and the sun
Wakes late now, and his course is swiftly run.

Philip Bourke Marston

'TIS April, but the drought of March
Is not yet pierced by sweet showers;
The unsheathed sunbeams smite and parch
The springing grass, the o'erhasting flowers.

Our lily of the valley, see,
That hardly ripens for Mid-May,
My love's first pledge and annual fee,
Is blown a month before the day.

The lawn grows rusty, dusty red,
For tho' all night the gracious dew
Bathes each wan blade, that else were dead,
It cannot their dried sap renew.

But in the orchard is a place
Where we may lie, and feel the fall
Of apple-petals on our face,
And drowsing hear the cuckoo's call.

The ring-dove's melancholy note,
The blackbird's fluting, and the hum
Of bees above us, more remote,
As slumber steals our senses. Come.

Henry Charles Beeching

HARK, the wild bee!—
Humming through the air
Snatches of last summer's glee!
Little merry murmurer!

Hark, the wild bee!
Hush, there's not a stir!
Little talk, at meals for thee,
Little busy banqueter!

Hark, the wild bee!
Prythee do not fear,
Every blossom blesses thee,
Little pleasant plunderer!

Hark, the wild bee!
Gold bags, I aver,
Slung from either thigh!—then flee,
Little moneyed messenger!

Hark, the wild bee!
One in Heaven doth steer
Thee, far ranging hill and lea,
Little vagrant voyager!

Charles A. Fox

In Nature's Garden

THE fields and garden-borders
Are bright because of spring,
The clouds of guelder roses
Are out and blossoming;
And close beside the gateway,
Tall, upon either hand,
Their green robes shot with sunlight,
Like queens, the Lilacs stand.

And one is crowned with purple,
And one is crowned with white;
Look! where the wind is passing
They bow to left and right,
And trails of scent they scatter
As royal gifts to all,
To every creature dwelling
Within the garden wall.

O queen in plumes of purple!
Throw me a breath of joy,
You are the queen of Spring-time,
And I a little boy;
But ask the lovely lady
With white plumes in her hair
To scent my heart with sweetness,
To make it pure and fair.

Violet Jacob

BUT who the melodies of morn can tell?
The wild brook babbling down the mountain side;
The lowing herd, the sheepfold's simple bell;
The pipe of early shepherd dim descried
In the lone valley; echoing far and wide
The clamorous horn along the cliffs above;
The hollow murmur of the ocean tide;
The hum of bees, the linnet's lay of love,
And the full choir that wakes the universal grove.

The cottage curs at early pilgrim bark;
Crowned with her pail the tripping milkmaid sings;
The whistling ploughman stalks afield; and hark!
Down the rough slope the ponderous waggon rings;
Through rustling corn the hare astonished springs;
Slow tolls the village clock the drowsy hour;
The partridge bursts away on whirring wings;
Deep mourns the turtle in sequestered bower,
And shrill lark carols clear from her aerial tour.

James Beattie

SING, birds, then sing! Let there be now no grief or sorrowing,
Sing but of youth and joy and hope and Love,
Of Summer and the happiness thereof,
Of lips that laugh and touch and hands that cling,
Sing, birds, then sing.

Know, roses, know truly ye are the sweetest flowers that blow,
Yet, though you are so radiantly fair,
Your beauty cannot with my Love's compare.
I gather you because she loves you so,
Know, roses, know.

Shine, sun, oh! shine. Can there be any happiness like mine?
Shine out and let not any clouds be near
To mar the hour that brings to me my Dear.
This day among all perfect days enshrine
Shine, sun, oh! shine.

Blow, Zephyr, blow swiftly as to my Love from me you go
And tell her that it is so late, so late,
And yet she cometh not: say that I wait
And moments seem as hours, they are so slow.
Blow, Zephyr, blow!

Maria Steuart

THERE is a bank (I love it well)
Where climbs the sorrel of the wood,
Here breathes, how frail! a puce-veined bell,
There snowy droops its crumpled hood.
With knotted roots of tinctured strings
A tender tapestry it weaves,
Whilst folding back like soft green wings
The lappets of its cloven leaves.
It is a dainty sight, I ween,
Of hoods, and bells, and fairy green;
But when the dews of evening fall,
They mutely bless the Lord of all,
And, closing, wait the daylight's call!
Hard by, o'ershadowed by the forest trees,
Like partial snowshowers, wood anemones
Outstretched in level masses of white shade,
People with magic companies the glade,
As fairy-land borne flying on the breeze
Had lighted round gnarled oaks of centuries,
While Spring repairs her roofless palaces.

Charles A. Fox

THAT man is blessed who every day is permitted to behold anything so pure and serene as the western sky at sunset, while revolutions vex the world.

Thoreau

BENEATH the green fir branches where doves
sit wing to wing,
A maid comes up the pathway across the woods
of Spring;
Her face is lit with sunshine, her eyes are soft
with showers,
Her heart is filled with music and both her hands
with flowers.

Her tresses touch the beeches, her feet dance in
the dew,
And fair about her shoulders the white clouds
fleck the blue;
Primroses are her fortune and daffodils her care;
Her hand is slipped in Summer's ere half the
world's aware.

The last snow fades before her, and looking in
her eyes,
Spelled by their witching magic the last rude
stormwind dies,
And on the cradle branches down all the wood-
lands deep,
Like a child tired of playing drops suddenly to
sleep.

She stands within our garden at breaking of the
day,
One hand holds dying snowdrops and one holds
budding May;

She stands within our garden at falling of the night,
One foot on silver dewdrops and one on hoar frost white.

A month before her coming the thrush to song has thrilled,
A month behind her passing the nesting swallows build;
And this is happy April, fair maid of sun and showers,
With her heart filled with music and both her hands with flowers!

Will H. Ogilvie

LEAF on the bough and fly on the wing,
Birds that sing, winds that swing
Roses thickly clustering,
Woodbine-blooms that clamber and cling,
Ferns that fresh in the woodland spring,
Flowers that sweets to the breezes fling,
Babble of streams and drips of wells,
Golden gleams and balmy smells,
Bees a-buzz in tremulous bells,—
What is the word their gladness tells,
What the bliss they bring?

G. F. Savage-Armstrong

O ROSES, clustering on the sunny wall
In fragrant groups of white and red together,
Bend down, bend down your branches, one and all,
Beneath the fair June sky and glowing weather;
And say to her, I send her
A message tender.

And thou, convolvulus, upon the gate,
With pale white bells and trails of light leaves swinging,
Tell her my love for her is strong as fate,
For ever true and like thy tendrils clinging;
And kiss her, soft and shy,
As she goes by.

O jessamine, in wreaths of scented stars
Across the balconies and stonework meeting,
Climb up and enter at her window-bars
And bear among your buds my loving greeting;
Then whisper, sweet and low,
'He waits below!'

Violet Jacob

THIS is the moon of roses,
The lovely and flowerful time;
And, as white roses climb the wall,
Your dreams about me climb.

This is the moon of roses,
Glad and golden and blue;
And, as red roses drink of the sun,
My dreams they drink of you.

This is the moon of roses!
The cherishing South-West blows,
And life, dear heart, for me and you,
O, life's a rejoicing rose.

W. E. Henley

DO you not hear it, hear it singing? Hush!
All beauty of the world, of life: a cry
Of passionate longing, love that cannot die,
Blent in a song together. 'Tis the thrush
Singing his lover's evening harmony
As if in one short strain he fain would try
All sweetness, rapture, power of love, to crush.
Do we not know his meaning, you and I?

Maria Steuart

I BRING you hope again: I am the Swallow.
I come with Spring;
And, coming, with me bring
Dreams of the Summer-tide that is to follow.

I am the earnest of sweet things to follow—
Long days, short nights,
Soft laughter and delights,
Love in all hearts and flowers in every hollow.

Summer will go and pleasure seem but hollow;
Roses must die,
Then I away shall fly.
I love not grief and cold: I am the Swallow.

Maria Steuart

SUCH blessings Nature pours,
O'erstock'd mankind enjoy but half her stores:
In distant wilds, by human eye unseen,
She rears her flow'rs, and spreads her velvet green:
Pure gurgling rills the lonely desert trace,
And waste their music on the savage race.

E. Young

NOT less attractive is the woodland scene,
Diversified with trees of every growth,
Alike, yet various. Here the gray, smooth trunks
Of ash, or lime, or beech distinctly shine,
Within the twilight of their distant shades;
There, lost behind a rising ground, the wood
Seems sunk, and shorten'd to its topmost boughs.
No tree in all the grove but has its charms,
Though each its hue peculiar; paler some,
And of a wannish grey: the willow such,
And poplar, that with silver lines his leaf,
And ash, far-stretching his umbrageous arm;
Of deeper green the elm; and deeper still,
Lord of the woods, the long surviving oak.
Some glossy-leaved, and shining in the sun,
The maple, and the beech of oily nuts
Prolific, and the lime at dewy eve
Diffusing odours: not unnoted pass
The sycamore, capricious in attire,
Now green, now tawny, and, ere autumn yet
Have changed the woods, in scarlet honours bright.
O'er these, but far beyond (a spacious map
Of hill and valley interposed between),
The Ouse, dividing the well-watered land,
Now glitters in the sun, and now retires
As bashful, yet impatient to be seen.

W. Cowper

A GREEN and silent spot, amid the hills,
A small and silent dell! O'er stiller place
No singing skylark ever poised himself.
The hills are healthy, save that swelling slope,
Which has a gay and gorgeous covering on,
All golden with the never-bloomless furze,
Which now blooms most profusely: but the dell,
Bathed by the mist, is fresh and delicate
As vernal corn-fields or the unripe flax,
When through its half-transparent stalks, at eve,
The level sunshine glimmers with green light.
Oh, 'tis a quiet spirit-healing nook,
Which all, methinks, would love; but chiefly he,
The humble man, who, in his youthful years,
Knew just so much of folly as had made
His early manhood more securely wise.
Here he might lie on fern or withered heath,
While from the singing-lark (that sings unseen
The minstrelsy that solitude loves best),
And from the sun, and from the breezy air,
Sweet influences trembled o'er his frame;
And he, with many feelings, many thoughts,
Made up a meditative joy, and found
Religious meanings in the forms of nature.
And so, his senses gradually wrapt
In a half sleep, he dreams of better worlds,
And dreaming, hears thee still, O singing-lark,
That singest like an angel in the clouds.

S. T. Coleridge

AFTER the fierce midsummer all ablaze
Has burned itself to ashes, and expires
In the intensity of its own fires,
There come the mellow, mild, St. Martin days
Crowned with the calm of peace, but sad with haze.
So after Love has led us till he tires
Of his own throes and torments, and desires,
Comes large-eyed friendship: with a restful gaze,
He beckons us to follow, and across
Cool verdant vales we wander free from care.
Is it a touch of frost lies in the air?
Why are we haunted with a sense of loss?
We do not wish the pain back, or the heat;
And yet, and yet, these days are incomplete.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

NO blossoms half so sweet are known
As those in memory's garden grown;
No sunshine now is half so bright
As that which bathed in golden light
The days of long ago.
So fair the scene I fain would stay,
But lo! the vision fades away;
Again I mingle with the throng,
But in my ear the skylark's song
Is ringing still.

A. G. Frost

RAIN! rain!
Oh, sweet Spring rain!
The world has been calling for thee in vain
Till now, and at last thou art with us again.
Oh, how shall we welcome the gentle showers,
The baby-drink of the first-born flowers,
That falls out of heaven as falleth the dew,
And touches the world to beauty anew?
Oh, rain! rain! dost thou feel and see
How the hungering world has been waiting for thee?
How every crack of the earth drinks down
With lips that but late were haggard and brown?
How streamlets whisper and leaves are shaken,
And winter sleeping things awaken,
And look around them, and rub their eyes,
And laugh into life at the glad surprise;
How the tongues are loosened that late were dumb,
For 'the time of the singing of birds has come';
How every tender flower holds up,
In trembling balance, its tiny cup,
To catch the food that in sultry weather
Must hold its little life together?
Oh, blessings on thee, thou sweet Spring rain,
That callest dead things to life again!

James Brown Selkirk

O NIGHTINGALE! thou surely art
A creature of a fiery heart;—
Those notes of thine—they pierce and pierce;
Tumultuous harmony and fierce!
Thou sing'st as if the God of wine
Had helped thee to a Valentine;
A song in mockery and despite
Of shades, and dews, and silent night;
And steady bliss, and all the loves
Now sleeping in the peaceful groves.

I heard a stock-dove sing or say
His lovely tale, this very day;
His note was buried among trees,
Yet to be come at by the breeze:
He did not cease; but cooed—and cooed;
And somewhat pensively he wooed:
He sang of love, with quiet blending,
Slow to begin, and never ending;
Of serious faith, and inward glee;
That was the Song—the Song for me!

W. Wordsworth

THE meanest floweret of the vale,
The simplest note that swells the gale,
The common sun, the air, the skies,
To him are opening paradise.

Thomas Gray

A ROSE, as fair as ever saw the North,
Grew in a little garden all alone;
A sweeter flower did Nature ne'er put forth,
Nor fairer garden yet was never known:
The maidens danced about it morn and noon,
And learnèd bards of it their ditties made;
The nimble fairies by the pale-faced moon
Water'd the root and kiss'd her pretty shade.
But well-a-day!—the gardener careless grew;
The maids and fairies both were kept away,
And in a drought the caterpillars threw
Themselves upon the bud and every spray.
God shield the stock! if heaven send no supplies
The fairest blossom of the garden dies.

William Browne.

I HAVE a garden of my own,
Shining with flowers of every hue.
I loved it dearly while alone,
But I shall love it more with you.
And there the golden bees shall come
In summertime at break of morn,
And wake us with their busy hum
Around the fragrant thorn.

T. Moore

FAIR pledges of a fruitful tree,
Why do ye fall so fast?
Your date is not so past,
But you may stay yet here awhile
To blush and gently smile,
And go at last.

What, were ye born to be
An hour or half's delight,
And so to bid good-night?
'Twas pity Nature brought ye forth,
Merely to show your worth
And lose you quite.

But you are lovely leaves, where we
May read, how soon things have
Their end, though ne'er so brave:
And after they have shown their pride
Like you awhile, they glide
Into the grave.

Robert Herrick

COME out of the world—come above it—
Up over its crosses and graves.
Though the green earth is fair, and I love it,
We must love it as masters, not slaves.
Come up where the dust never rises—
But only the perfume of flowers—
And your life shall be glad with surprises
Of beautiful hours.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

NOW fades the last long streak of snow,
Now burgeons every maze of quick
About the flowering squares, and thick
By ashen roots the violets blow.

Now rings the woodland loud and long,
The distance takes a lovelier hue,
And drowned in yonder living blue
The lark becomes a sightless song.

Now dance the lights on lawn and lea,
The flocks are whiter down the vale,
And milkier every milky sail
On winding stream or distant sea;

Where now the seamew pipes, or dives
In yonder greening gleam, and fly
The happy birds, that change their sky
To build and brood, that live their lives

From land to land; and in my breast
Spring wakens too; and my regret
Becomes an April violet,
And buds and blossoms like the rest.

Lord Tennyson

THE hazel-blooms, in threads of crimson hue,
Peep through the swelling buds, foretelling Spring,
Ere yet a white-thorn leaf appears in view,
Or March finds throstles pleased enough to sing.
To the old touchwood-tree woodpeckers cling
A moment, and their harsh-toned notes renew;
In happier mood, the stockdove claps his wing;
The squirrel sputters up the powdered oak,
With tail cocked o'er his head, and ears erect,
Startled to hear the woodman's understroke;
And with the courage which his fears collect,
He hisses fierce, half malice and half glee,
Leaping from branch to branch about the tree,
In winter's foliage, moss and lichens, deckt.

J. Clare

HOW sweet is the shepherd's sweet lot;
From the morn to the evening he strays;
He shall follow his sheep all the day,
And his tongue shall be fillèd with praise.

For he hears the lambs' innocent call,
And he hears the ewes' tender reply;
He is watchful while they are at peace,
For they know when their shepherd is nigh,

W. Blake

CLEAR had the day been from the dawn,
All chequered was the sky,
Thin clouds, like scarfs of cobweb lawn,
Veiled heaven's most glorious eye.

The wind had no more strength than this,
That leisurely it blew.
To make one leaf the next to kiss,
That closely by it grew.

The flowers, like brave embroidered girls,
Looked as they most desired
To see whose head with orient pearls
Most curiously was tyred.

The rills, that on the pebbles played,
Might now be heard at will;
This world the only music made,
Else everything was still.

And to itself the subtle air
Such sovereignty assumes,
That it receives too large a share
From nature's rich perfumes.

Michael Drayton

OPEN the window, and let the air
Freshly blow upon the face and hair,
And fill the room, as it fills the night,
With the breath of the rain's sweet might,
Hark! the burthen, swift and prone!
And how the odorous limes are blown!
Stormy Love's abroad, and keeps
Hopeful coil for gentle sleeps.

Not a blink shall burn to-night
In my chamber of sordid light;
Nought will I have, not a window-pane,
'Twixt me and the air and the great good rain,
Which ever shall sing me sharp lullabies;
And God's own darkness shall close mine eyes;
And I will sleep with all things blest,
In the pure earth shadow of natural rest.

Leigh Hunt

SPRING in the garden, the springtime again,
Merrily singing a gladsome refrain;
Blackbird on lilac is fluting a tune
All the long, gold, sunny, glad afternoon.
Spring of all seasons the sweetest above—
Spring is the season to live and to love!

Alice E. Temple

SEE the rivers flowing
Downwards to the sea,
Pouring all their treasures
Bountiful and free—
Yet to help their giving
Hidden springs arise;
Or, if need be, showers
Feed them from the skies!

Watch the princely flowers
Their rich fragrance spread
Load the air with perfumes,
From their beauty shed—
Yet their lavish spending
Leaves them not in dearth,
With fresh life replenished
By their mother earth!

Give thy heart's best treasures—
From fair Nature learn;
Give thy love—and ask not,
Wait not a return!
And the more thou spendest
From thy little store,
With a double bounty,
God will give thee more.

Adelaide A. Procter

BIRD of the wilderness,
Blithesome and cumberless,
Sweet be thy matin o'er moorland and lea!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
O, to abide in the desert with thee!

Wild is thy lay and loud,
Far in the downy cloud
Love gives it energy, love gave it birth.
Where, on thy dewy wing,
Where art thou journeying?
Thy lay is in heaven, thy love is on earth.

O'er fell and fountain sheen,
O'er moor and mountain green,
O'er the red streamer that heralds the day,
Over the cloudlet dim,
Over the rainbow's brim,
Musical cherub, soar, singing, away.

Then when the gloaming comes,
Low in the heather blooms,
Sweet will thy welcome and bed of love be!
Emblem of happiness,
Blest is thy dwelling-place—
O, to abide in the desert with thee!

James Hogg

DOST thou remember how one morn in Spring
A bunch of yellow roses sweet and rare,
Gathered while yet the garden walks were bare,
Into thy presence, dearest, I did bring?
And vowed their bloom, for all its blossoming,
Was but as dust beside thy beauty fair,
The tender silence and the gracious air
That thy poor poet loves so dear to sing!—
And ere we parted, dost thou still recall
The kiss I pressed upon the quivering flowers?
Whispering, "Whatsoever may befall
Within Love's garden land of sun and showers,
This Token shall remain with thee through all
The silence of thy sad and lonely hours!"

*William Akerman.**

* By kind permission of the Author.

SWEET Flower!
That breath'st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature!

W. Wordsworth

SUMMER is gone on swallows' wings,
And Earth has buried all her flowers:
No more the lark, or linnet sings,
But Silence sits in faded bowers.
There is a shadow on the plain
Of Winter ere he comes again,—
There is in the woods a solemn sound
Of hollow warnings whispered round,
As Echo in her deep recess
For once had turned a prophetess.
Shuddering Autumn stops to list,
And breathes his fear in sudden sighs,
With clouded face, and hazel eyes
That quench themselves, and hide in mist.

T. Hood

WHERE'ER
Man feels as man, the earth is beautiful.
His blessings sanctify even senseless things,
And the wide world in cheerful loveliness
Returns to him its joy. The summer air,
Whose glittering stillness sleeps within his soul,
Stirs with its own delight. The verdant earth,
Like beauty awaking from a happy dream,
Lies smiling. . . . Ever blest
The man who thus beholds the golden chain
Linking his soul to outward Nature fair,
Full of the living God!

Professor Wilson

THE garden walks are wet with dew
Fresh gathered from the drowsy hours,
The busy insects hum anew,
And stir to life the sleeping powers:
While gaily from the green o'er head
Upon a spray of tender thorn
That blushes into white and red
A glad thrush sings and wakes the morn!

So I, whose eyes were clouded o'er
With shadows deep the whole night long
Feel trembling through my frame once more
A flash of fire, a flood of song;
Mine eyes are opened to the light,
Through all my soul new raptures run,
I too have left behind the night,
And rising face the morning sun.

*William Akerman**

By kind permission of the Author.

SWEET is the breath of morn, her rising sweet,
With charm of earliest birds: pleasant the sun,
When first on this delightful land he spreads
His orient beams, on herb, tree, fruit and flower,
Glistening with dew; fragrant the fertile earth
After soft showers; and the sweet coming on
Of grateful Evening mild; the silent Night,
With this her solemn bird, and this fair moon,
And these gems of Heaven, her starry train.

FAIR daffodils, we weep to see
You haste away so soon;
As yet the early rising sun
Has not attain'd his noon.
Stay, stay,
Until the hasting day
Has run
But to the evensong;
And, having prayed together, we
Will go with you along.

We have short time to stay, as you,
We have as short a spring;
As quick a growth to meet decay,
As you, or anything.
We die,
As your hours do, and dry
Away,
Like to the summer's rain;
Or as the pearls of morning's dew
Ne'er to be found again.

Robert Herrick

IN all places, then, and in all seasons,
Flowers expand their light and soul-like wings;
Teaching us by most persuasive reasons,
How akin they are to human things.

H. W. Longfellow

O BLACKBIRD! sing me something well;
While all the neighbours shoot thee round,
I keep smooth plots of fruitful ground,
Where thou may'st warble, eat and dwell.

The espaliers and the standards all
Are thine; the range of lawn and park:
The unnetted black-hearts ripen dark,
All thine, against the garden wall.

Yet, tho' I spared thee all the spring,
Thy sole delight is sitting still,
With that gold dagger of thy bill
To fret the summer jenneting.

A golden bill! the silver tongue,
Cold February loved, is dry!
Plenty corrupts the melody
That made thee famous once, when young:

And in the sultry garden-squares,
Now thy flute-notes are changed to coarse,
I hear thee not at all, or hoarse
As when a hawker hawks his wares.

Take warning! he that will not sing
While yon sun prospers in the blue,
Shall sing for want, ere leaves are new,
Caught in the frozen palms of Spring.

Lord Tennyson

IT is the hour when from the boughs
The nightingale's high note is heard;
It is the hour when lovers' vows
Seem sweet in every whispered word;
And gentle winds, and waters near,
Make music to the lonely ear.
Each flower the dews have lightly wet,
And in the sky the stars are met,
And on the wave is deeper blue,
And on the leaf a browner hue,
And in the heaven that clear obscure,
So softly dark, and darkly pure,
Which follows the decline of day,
As twilight melts beneath the moon away.

Lord Byron

NOT wholly in the busy world, nor quite
Beyond it, blooms the garden that I love.
News from the humming city comes to it
In sound of funeral or of marriage bells;
And, sitting muffled in dark leaves you hear
The windy clanging of the minster clock;
Although between it and the garden lies
A league of grass, wash'd by a slow broad stream
That, stirr'd with languid pulses of the oar
Waves all its lilies.

Lord Tennyson

FOR ages on our river borders,
These tassels in their tawny bloom,
And willowy studs of downy silver,
Have prophesied of Spring to come.

For ages have the unbound waters
Smiled on them from their pebbly hem,
And the clear carol of the robin
And song of bluebird welcomed them.

But never yet from smiling river,
Or song of early bird, have they
Been greeted with a gladder welcome
Than whispers from my heart to-day.

They break the spell of cold and darkness,
The weary watch of sleepless pain;
And from my heart, as from the river,
The ice of winter melts again.

J. G. Whittier

YOU love the Roses—so do I. I wish
The sky would rain down Roses, as they rain
From off the shaken bush. Why will it not?
Then all the valley would be pink and white
And soft to tread on. They would fall as light
As feathers, smelling sweet; and it would be
Like sleeping and like waking, all at once!

George Eliot

PUT forth thy leaf, thou lofty plane,
East wind and frost are safely gone;
With zephyr mild and balmy rain
The summer comes serenely on;
Earth, air, and sun and skies combine
To promise all that's kind and fair—
But thou, O human heart of mine,
Be still, contain thyself, and bear.

December days were brief and chill,
The winds of March were wild and drear,
And, nearing and receding still,
Spring never would, we thought, be here.
The leaves that burst, the suns that shine,
Had, not the less, their certain date—
But thou, O human heart of mine,
Be still, refrain thyself and wait.

A. H. Clough

MY heart is like a singing bird,
Whose nest is in a watered shute;
My heart is like an apple-tree,
Whose boughs are bent with thickset fruit.
My heart is like a rainbow shell
That paddles in a halcyon sea;
My heart is gladder than all these,
Because my love is come to me.

Christina G. Rossetti

WITH little here to do or see
Of things that in the great world be,
Daisy, again I talk to thee,
For thou art worthy,
Thou unassuming common-place
Of nature, with that homely face,
And yet with something of a grace
Which love makes for thee.

I see thee glittering from afar—
And then thou art a pretty star;
Not quite so fair as many are
In heaven above thee:
Yet like a star, with glittering crest,
Self-poised in air thou seem'st to rest;—
May peace come never to his nest,
Who shall reprove thee!

Bright flower, for by that name at last,
When all my reveries are past,
I call thee, and to that cleave fast,
Sweet silent creature,
That breath'st with me in sun and air,
Do thou, as thou art wont, repair
My heart with gladness, and a share
Of thy meek nature.

W. Wordsworth

THE garden trees are busy with the shower
That fell ere sunset; now methinks they talk,
Lowly and sweetly as befits the hour,
One to another down the grassy walk.
Hark the laburnum from his opening flower
This cherry-creeper greets in whisper light,
While the grim fir, rejoicing in the night,
Hoarse mutters to the murmuring sycamore.
What shall I deem their converse. Would they hail
The wild grey light that fronts yon massive cloud,
Or the half bow, rising like pillared fire?
Or are they sighing faintly for desire
That with May dawn their leaves may be o'erflowed
And dews about their feet may never fail?

Arthur Henry Hallam

THAT time of year . . .
When yellow leaves, or none, or few, do hang
Upon those boughs which shake against the cold,
Bare ruin'd choirs, where late the sweet birds sang.

Shakespeare

THIS day Dame Nature seem'd in love
The lusty sap began to move;
Fresh juice did stir th' embracing vines,
And birds had drawn their valentines;
The jealous trout that low did lie
Rose at the well-dissembled fly;
There stood my friend, with patient skill
Attending of his trembling quill.
Already were the eaves possess'd
With the swift pilgrim's daubèd nest,
The groves already did rejoice
In Philomel's triumphing voice;
The showers were short, the weather mild,
The morning fresh, the evening smiled:
Joan takes the neat-rubb'd pail, and now
She trips to milk the sand-red cow;
Where for some sturdy football swain
Joan strokes a syllabub or twain;
The fields and gardens were beset
With tulip, crocus, violet;
And now, though late the modest rose
Did more than half a blush disclose,
They all look'd gay and full of cheer
To welcome the new-liveried year.

Sir Henry Wotton

I SAW the day lean o'er the world's sharp edge,
And peer into night's chasm, dark and damp.
High in his hand he held a blazing lamp,
Then dropped it, and plunged headlong down the ledge.

With lurid splendour that swift paled to grey
I saw the dim skies suddenly flush bright.
'Twas but the expiring glory of the light
Flung from the hand of the adventurous day.

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

NIGHT wanes—the vapours round the mountain curl'd
Melt into morn, and light awakes the world.
Man has another day to swell his past,
And lead him near to little, but his last;
But mighty nature bounds as from her birth,
The sun is in the heavens, and life on earth;
Flowers in the valley, splendour in the beam,
Health on the gale, and freshness in the stream.
Immortal man! behold her glories shine,
And cry, exulting inly, 'They are thine!'
Gaze on, while yet thy gladdened eye may see,
A morrow comes when they are not for thee.

Lord Byron

UNWATCH'D the garden bough shall sway,
The tender blossom flutter down,
Unloved that beech will gather brown,
This maple burn itself away;

Unloved, the sun-flower, shining fair,
Ray round with flames her disk of seed,
And many a rose-carnation feed
With summer spice the humming air;

Unloved, by many a sandy bar,
The brook shall babble down the plain,
At noon or when the lesser wain
Is twisting round the polar star;

Uncared for, gird the windy grove,
And floods the haunts of hern and crake;
Or into silver arrows break
The sailing moon in creek and cove;

Till from the garden and the wild
A fresh association blow,
And year by year the landscape grow
Familiar to the stranger's child;

As year by year the labourer tills
His wonted glebe, or lops the glades:
And year by year our memory fades
From all the circle of the hills.

Lord Tennyson

HOW sweet I roamed from field to field
And tasted all the summer's pride,
Till I the Prince of Love beheld,
Who in the sunny beams did glide!

He showed me lilies for my hair,
And blushing roses for my brow;
He led me through his garden fair,
Where all his golden pleasures grow.

With sweet May-dews my wings are wet,
And Phœbus fired my vocal rage;
He caught me in his silken net,
And shut me in his golden cage.

He loves to sit and hear me sing,
Then, laughing, sports and plays with me;
Then stretches out my golden wing,
And mocks my loss of liberty.

W. Blake

AT last
The clouds consign their treasures to the fields;
And, softly shaking on the dimpled pool
Prelusive drops, let all their moisture flow,
In large effusion, o'er the freshn'd world;
The stealing shower is scarce to patter heard,
By such as wander through the forest walks,
Beneath the umbrageous multitude of leaves.

J. Thomson

TO hear the lark begin his flight,
And, singing, startle the dull night,
From his watch tower in the skies,
Till the dappled dawn doth rise;
Then to come in spite of sorrow,
And at my window bid good-morrow,
Through the sweet-briar, or the vine,
Or the twisted eglantine:
While the cock with lively din
Scatters the rear of darkness thin,
And to the stack, or the barn-door,
Stoutly struts his dames before:
Oft list'ning how the hounds and horn
Cheerily rouse the slumb'ring morn,
From the side of some hoar hill,
Through the high wood echoing shrill.

John Milton

JUNE in the garden with roses of red;
Daisies of silver in meadows are spread.
From the stream's heart steals so tender a lay,
Sweet is the music the zephyrs do play.
Roses and swallows! the lark in the sky,
Loveliest of any is June's month, say I!

Anon.

I HEARD a thousand blended notes
While in a grove I sat reclined,
In that sweet mood when pleasant thoughts
Bring sad things to the mind.

To her fair works did Nature link
The human soul that through me ran;
And much it grieved my heart to think
What Man has made of Man.

Through primrose tufts, in that sweet bower,
The periwinkle trail'd its wreaths;
And 'tis my faith that every flower
Enjoys the air it breathes.

The birds around me hopp'd and play'd,
Their thoughts I cannot measure—
But the least motion which they made
It seem'd a thrill of pleasure.

The budding twigs spread out their fan
To catch the breezy air;
And I must think, do all I can,
That there was pleasure there.

If this belief from heaven be sent,
If such be Nature's holy plan,
Have I not reason to lament
What Man has made of Man?

W. Wordsworth

HOW like the sea, the myriad-minded sea,
Is this large love of ours: so vast, so deep,
So full of mysteries! It, too, can keep
Its secrets, like the ocean; and is free,
Free, as the boundless main. Now it may be
Calm, like the brow of some sweet child asleep;
Again its seething billows surge and leap
And break in fulness of their ecstasy.

Each wave so like the wave which came before,
Yet never two the same! Imperative
And then persuasive as the cooing dove,
Encroaching ever on the yielding shore—
Ready to take; yet readier still to give—
How like the myriad-minded sea, is love!

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

O THRUSH, grey-breasted, on the tree-top swinging,
What joy is thine
That sets the damp and sunless air a-reeling
With such a joy-peal, pealing and re-pealing?
What mystic wine?
What grape-gold nectar-draught hast thou been stealing,
O bird, grey-breasted, on the tree-top singing?

Henry Bellyse Baildon

In Nature's Garden

THERE is a garden where lilies
And roses are side by side;
And all day between them in silence
The silken butterflies glide.

I may not enter the garden,
Though I know the road thereto;
And morn by morn to the gateway
I see the children go.

They bring back light on their faces;
But they cannot bring back to me
What the lilies say to the roses,
Or the songs of the butterflies be.

F. T. Palgrave

HOW dear to me the hour when daylight dies,
And sunbeams melt along the silent sea;
For then sweet dreams of other days arise,
And memory breathes her vesper sight to thee!
And, as I watch the line of light that plays
Along the smooth wave toward the burning west,
I long to tread that golden path of rays,
And think 'twould lead to some bright isle of rest.

T. Moore

FROM the moist meadow to the wither'd hill,
Led by the breeze, the vivid verdure runs,
And swells, and deepens, to the cherish'd eye.
The hawthorn whitens, and the juicy groves
Put forth their buds, unfolding by degrees,
Till the whole leafy forest stands display'd,
In full luxuriance, to the sighing gales;
Where the deer rustle through the twining brake,
And the birds sing conceal'd. At once array'd
In all the colours of the flushing year,
By Nature's swift and secret-working hand,
The garden glows, and fills the liberal air
With lavish fragrance; while the promised fruit
Lies yet a little embryo, unperceived,
Within its crimson folds. Now from the town
Buried in smoke, and sleep, and noisome damps,
Oft let me wander o'er the dewy fields,
Where freshness breathes, and dash the trembling drops
From the bent bush, as through the verdant maze
Of sweetbriar hedges I pursue my walk.

J. Thomson

WISE Nature ever, with a prudent hand,
Dispenses various gifts to ev'ry land;
To every nation frugally imparts
A genius fit for some peculiar arts.

Soames Jenyns

HOW beautiful this night! the balmiest sigh,
Which vernal zephyrs breathe in evening's ear,
Were discord to the speaking quietude
That wraps this moveless scene. Heaven's ebon vault,
Studded with stars unutterably bright,
Through which the moon's unclouded grandeur rolls,
Seems like a canopy which love has spread
To curtain her sleeping world. Yon gentle hills
Robed in a garment of untrodden snow;
Yon darksome rocks, whence icicles depend
So stainless, that their white and glittering spires
Tinge not the moon's pure beam; yon castled steep,
Whose banner hangeth o'er the time-worn tower
So idly, that rapt fancy deemeth it
A metaphor of peace; all form a scene
Where musing solitude might love to lift
Her soul above this sphere of earthliness;
Where Silence undisturbed might watch alone,
So cold, so bright, so still.

P. B. Shelley

SLOWLY, slowly, up the wall
Steals the sunshine, steals the shade.
Evening damps begin to fall,
Evening shadows are displayed.
Round me, o'er me, everywhere,
All the sky is grand with clouds,
And athwart the evening air
Wheel the swallows home in crowds.
Shafts of sunshine from the west
Paint the dusky windows red;
Darker shadows, deeper rest,
Underneath and overhead.
Darker, darker and more wan,
In my breast the shadows fall;
Upward steals the life of man,
As the sunshine from the wall.
From the wall into the sky,
From the roof along the spire;
Ah, the souls of those that die
Are but sunbeams lifted higher.

H. W. Longfellow

IT'S surely summer, for there's a swallow:
Come one swallow, his mate will follow,
The bird race quicken and wheel and thicken.

Oh, happy swallow, whose mate will follow
O'er height, o'er hollow! I'd be a swallow,
To build this weather one nest together.

Christina Rossetti

In Nature's Garden

I BRING fresh showers for the thirsting flowers
From the seas and the streams.
I bear light shade for the leaves when laid
In their noonday dreams.
From my wings are shaken the dews that waken
The sweet buds every one,
When rocked to rest on their Mother's breast,
As she dances about the sun.
I wield the flail of the lashing hail,
And whiten the green plains under;
And then again I dissolve it in rain,
And laugh as I pass in thunder.
I sift the snow on the mountain below,
And their great pines groan aghast;
And all the night 'tis my pillow white,
While I sleep in the arms of the Blast.
Sublime on the towers of my skiey bowers
Lightning my pilot sits;
In a cavern under is fettered the Thunder,
It struggles and howls at fits.
Over earth and ocean with gentle motion
This pilot is guiding me,
Lured by the love of the Genii that move
In the depths of the purple sea;
Over the rills and the crags and the hills,
Over the lakes and the plains,
Wherever he dream under mountain or stream
The Spirit he loves remains;
And I all the while bask in heaven's blue smile
Whilst he is dissolving in rains.

P. B. Shelley

SWEET was the sound, when oft at even's close,
Up yonder hill the village murmur rose.
There as I pass'd with careless steps and slow,
The mingling notes came soften'd from below—
The swain responsive as the milkmaid sung,
The sober herd that low'd to meet their young,
The noisy geese that gabbled o'er the pool,
The playful children just let loose from school,
The watch-dog's bark that bay'd the whispering wind
And the loud laugh that spoke the vacant mind—
These all in sweet confusion sought the shade,
And fill'd each pause the nightingale had made.

O. Goldsmith

THIS is thy hour, O Soul, thy free flight into the wordless,
Away from books, away from Art, the day erased, the lesson done,
Thee fully forth emerging, silent, gazing, pondering the themes thou lovest best,
Night, sleep, death, and the stars.

Walt Whitman

UNDER the greenwood tree
Who loves to lie with me,
And tune his merry note
Unto the sweet bird's throat,
Come hither, come hither, come hither,
Here shall he see
No enemy,
But winter and rough weather.

Who doth ambition shun,
And loves to lie i' the sun,
Seeking the food he eats,
And pleas'd with what he gets,
Come hither, come hither, come hither,
Here shall he see
No enemy
But winter and rough weather.

Shakespeare

I LOOKED,
And in the likeness of a river, saw
Light flowing, from whose amber-seeming waves
Flashed up effulgence, as they glided on
'Twixt banks on either side painted with Spring
Incredible how fair; and from the tide
There ever and anon, outstarting, flew
Sparkles instinct with life; and in the flowers
Did set them, like to rubies chased in gold.

Dante

MOAN, oh ye Autumn Winds!
Summer has fled,
The flowers have closed their tender leaves and die;
The Lily's gracious head
All low must lie,
Because the gentle Summer now is dead.

Grieve, oh ye Autumn Winds!
Summer lies low;
The rose's trembling leaves will soon be shed,
For she that loved her so,
Alas, is dead!
And one by one her loving children go.

Wail, oh ye Autumn Winds!
She lives no more,
The gentle Summer, with her balmy breath,
Still sweeter than before
When nearer death,
And brighter every day the smile she wore!

Mourn, mourn, oh Autumn Winds,
Lament and mourn;
How many half-blown buds must close and die;
Hopes with the Summer born
All faded lie,
And leave us desolate and Earth forlorn!

Adelaide A. Procter

O NIGHTINGALE! that on yon bloomy spray
Warblest at eve, when all the woods are still;
Thou with fresh hope the lover's heart dost fill,
While the jolly hours lead on propitious May.
Thy liquid notes that close the eye of day,
First heard before the shallow cuckoo's bill,
Portend success in love. O! if Jove's will
Have linked that amorous power to thy soft lay,
Now timely sing, ere the rude bird of hate
Foretell my hopeless doom in some grove nigh;
As thou from year to year hast sung too late
For my relief, yet hadst no reason why;
Whether the Muse or Love call thee his mate,
Both them I serve, and of their train am I.

John Milton

ALL Nature is but Art, unknown to thee;
All chance, direction, which thou can'st not see;
All discord, harmony, not understood;
All partial evil, Universal Good;
And, spite of pride, in erring reason's spite,
One truth is clear, whatever is, is right.

A. Pope

MY heart leaps up when I behold
A rainbow in the sky:
So was it when my life began;
So is it now I am a man:
So be it when I shall grow old,
Or let me die!
The Child is father of the Man;
And I could wish my days to be
Bound each to each by natural piety.

W. Wordsworth

THE same sweet violets bloom again;
The same blue skies and soft clear rain;
The birds their song once more renew;
Is it the Spring last year we knew?
This year Spring comes with fairer face,
To lend the garden sweeter grace,
But oh, how dearer than the past
Is this new Spring come back at last!

Constance Meredith

DEAR Nature is the kindest mother still;
Though always changing in her aspect mild.

Lord Byron

TO sit on rocks, to muse o'er flood and fell,
To slowly trace the forest's shady scene,
Where things that own not man's dominion dwell,
And mortal foot hath ne'er, or rarely been:
To climb the trackless mountain all unseen,
With the wild flock that never needs a fold;
Alone o'er steeps and foaming falls to lean;
This is not solitude; 'tis but to hold
Converse with nature's charms, and see her stores unrolled.

Lord Byron

WHAT is it makes it so hard sometimes to determine whither we will walk? I believe that there is a subtle magnetism in nature which, if we unconsciously yield to it will direct us aright. It is not indifferent to us which way we walk. There is a right way; but we are very liable from heedlessness and stupidity to take the wrong one. We would fain take that walk, never yet taken by us through this actual world, which is perfectly symbolical of the path we love to travel in the interior and ideal world; and, sometimes, no doubt, we find it difficult to choose our direction, because it does not yet exist distinctly in our idea.

Thoreau

THE earth was green, and the sky was blue:
I saw and heard one sunny morn
A skylark hang between the two,
A singing speck above the corn.

A stage below, in gay accord,
White butterflies danced on the wing,
And still the singing skylark soared,
And silent sank and soared to sing.

The cornfield stretched a tender green
To right and left beside my walks;
I knew he had a nest unseen
Somewhere among the million stalks.

And as I paused to hear his song
While swift the sunny moments slid,
Perhaps his mate sat listening long,
And listened longer than I did.

Christina Rossetti

THE bee through flowery gardens goes
Buzzing to drink the morning's tears,
And from the early lily bears
A kiss commended to the Rose,
And like a wary messenger,
Whispers some amorous story in his ear.

Sir Edward Sherburne

WHERE are the songs of Spring? Ay, where are they?
Think not of them, thou hast thy music too,—
While barrèd clouds bloom the soft-dying day,
And touch the stubble-plains with rosy hue;
Then in a wailful choir the small gnats mourn,
Among the river sallows, borne aloft
Or sinking as the light wind lives or dies;
And full-grown lambs loud bleat from hilly bourn:
Hedge-crickets sing; and now with treble soft
The redbreast whistles from a garden croft;
And gathering swallows twitter in the skies.

John Keats

LEAVES are falling, mists are twining, and to winter sleep inclining
Are the trees upon the plain,
In the hush of stillness ere the snowflakes hide them,
Friendly Nature, speak to me again !
Thou art echo and reflection of our striving,
Thou art painter of our hopes and of our fears,
Thou art singer of our joys and of our sorrows,
Of our consolation and our groans.

J. G. Jacobi

'TIS the merry nightingale
That crowds, and hurries, and precipitates
With fast thick warble his delicious notes,
As he were fearful that an April night
Would be too short for him to utter forth
His love-chant, and disburthen his full soul
Of all its music.
And I know a grove
Of large extent, hard by a castle huge,
Which the great lord inhabits not; and so
This grove is wild with tangling underwood,
And the trim walks are broken up, and grass,
Thin grass and king-cups grow within the paths.
But never elsewhere in one place I knew
So many nightingales; and far and near
In wood and thicket, over the wide grove,
They answer and provoke each other's song,
With skirmish and capricious passagings,
And murmurs musical and swift jug-jug,
And one low piping sound more sweet than all—
Stirring the air with such harmony,
That should you close your eyes, you might almost
Forget it was not day.

S. T. Coleridge

HERE'S eglantine,
Here's ivy!—take them, as I used to do,
Thy flowers, and keep them where they shall not pine.
Instruct thine eyes to keep their colours true,
And tell thy soul their roots are left in mine.

E. B. Browning

I'VE watch'd you now a full half-hour
Self-poised upon that yellow flower;
And little butterfly, indeed,
I know not if you sleep or feed.
How motionless!—not frozen seas
More motionless; and then
What joy awaits you, when the breeze
Hath found you out among the trees,
And calls you forth again!

This plot of orchard ground is ours;
My trees they are, my sister's flowers;
Here rest your wings when they are weary,
Here lodge as in a sanctuary!
Come often to us, fear no wrong;
Sit near us on the bough!
We'll talk of sunshine and of song:
And summer days, when we were young;
Sweet childish days, that were as long
As twenty days are now.

W. Wordsworth

AND could we live more near allied
To cloud and mountain, wind and tide,
Cast this unmeaning coil aside,
And go forth free,
The world our goal, Desire our guide,
We then might see

Those master moments grow less rare,
And oftener feel that nameless air
Come rumouring from we know not where;
And touch at whiles
Fantastic shores, the fringes fair
Of fairy isles;

And hail the mystic bird that brings
News from the inner courts of things,
The eternal courier-dove whose wings
Are never furled;
And hear the bubbling of the springs
That feed the world.

William Watson

O MY Garden, full of roses,
Red as passion and as sweet,
Failing not when summer closes,
Lasting on through cold and heat!
O my Garden, full of lilies,
White as peace, and very tall,
In your midst my heart so still is
I can hear the last leaf fall!

Philip Bourke Marston

O STAY, sweet warbling wood-lark, stay,
Nor quit for me the trembling spray,
A hapless lover courts thy lay,
Thy soothing fond complaining.

Again, again that tender part,
That I may catch thy melting art;
For surely that wad touch her heart,
Wha kills me wi' disdaining.

Say was thy little mate unkind,
And heard thee as the careless wind?
Oh, nocht but love and sorrow joined
Sic notes o' wae could wauken.

Thou tells o' never-ending care;
O' speechless grief, and dark despair:
For pity's sake, sweet bird, nae mair!
Or my poor heart is broken!

Robert Burns

A GARDEN is earth's hymn of praise to heaven,
Sung every season in some changing tune,
Where chords are colours, and where odours sweet
Are tender symphonies.

Alan Estmere

THE poplars are fell'd, farewell to the shade
And the whispering sound of the cool colonnade
The winds play no longer and sing in the leaves,
Nor Ouse on his bosom their image receives.

Twelve years have elapsed since I last took a view
Of my favourite field, and the bank where they grew:
And now in the grass behold they are laid,
And the tree is my seat that once lent me a shade.

The blackbird has fled to another retreat
Where the hazels afford him a screen from the heat;
And the scene where his melody charm'd me before
Resounds with his sweet-flowing ditty no more.

My fugitive years are all hasting away,
And I must ere long lie as lowly as they,
With a turf on my breast and a stone at my head,
Ere another such grove shall arise in its stead.

'Tis a sight to engage me, if anything can,
To muse on the perishing pleasures of man;
Short-lived as we are, our enjoyments, I see
Have a still shorter date, and die sooner than we.

W. Cowper

THE sun upon the lake is low,
The wild birds hush their song,
The hills have evening's deepest glow,
Yet Leonard tarries long.
Now all whom varied toil and care
From home and love divide,
In the calm sunset may repair
Each to the loved one's side.

The noble dame on turret high,
Who waits her gallant knight,
Looks to the western beam to spy
The flash of armour bright.
The village maid, with hand on brow
The level ray to shade,
Upon the footpath watches now
For Colin's darkening plaid.

Now to their mates the wild swans row,
By day they swam apart,
And to the thicket wanders slow
The hind beside the hart.
The woodlark at his partner's side
Twitters his closing song—
All meet whom day and care divide,
But Leonard tarries long!

Sir W. Scott

SING a Song of Roses! Love has come to-day,
Come like early rosebuds, sweet and shy but gay.
Rosebuds will be roses: love will greater grow,
Only half its sweetness dimly yet we know.
Rosebuds in the garden gathered, Love, for you,
Had they such in Eden when the world was new?

Sing a Song of Roses! Love so great has grown,
What shall we compare it to? Roses fully blown?
Sweetness, fulness, beauty brought by sun and rain!
Is not this our happiness close akin to pain?
Roses in their glory, Love, I bring to you;
Joy approaching agony—roses touching rue.

Sing a Dirge of Roses! Sung by one who grieves.
Dead are all the roses: fall the autumn leaves.
But the dead rose-petals keep their scent, and I
In my heart will keep you till the day I die.
Rose-leaves in their sweetness on your grave I strew
Bitter-sweet with memories of our love and you.

Marie Steuart

THE cheerfulness of heart which springs up in us from the survey of Nature's works, is an admirable preparation for gratitude. The mind has gone a great way towards praise and thanksgiving that is filled with such a secret gladness: a grateful reflection on the Supreme Cause who produces it, sanctifies the soul, and gives it its proper value. Such an habitual disposition of mind consecrates every field and wood, turns an ordinary walk into a morning or evening sacrifice, and will improve those transient gleams of joy, which naturally brighten up and refresh the soul on such occasions, into an inviolable and perpetual state of bliss and happiness.

J. Addison

ART thou pale for weariness
Of climbing heaven, and gazing on the earth,
Wandering companionless
Among the stars that have a different birth,—
And ever-changing, like a joyless eye
That finds no object worth its constancy?

P. B. Shelley

SAUNTERING hither on listless wings,
Careless vagabond of the sea.
Little thou heedest the surf that sings,
The bar that thunders, the shale that rings,—
Give me to keep thy company.

Little hast thou, old friend, that's new,
Storms and wrecks are old things to thee:
Sick am I of these changes too;
Little to care for, little to rue,
I on the shore, and thou on the sea.

All of thy wanderings far and near,
Bring thee at last to shore and me;
All of my journeyings end them here,
This our tether must be our cheer,—
I on the shore, and thou on the sea.

Lazily rocking on ocean's breast,
Something in common, old friend, have we;
Thou on the shingle seek'st thy nest,
I to the waters look for rest,—
I on the shore, and thou on the sea.

Bret Harte

AS for the leaves that in the garden bloom
My love for them is great, as is the good
Dealt by the Eternal Hand that tends them all.

Dante

OH, to be in England now that April's there,
And whoever wakes in England sees, some morning unaware,
That the lowest boughs and the brushwood sheaf
Round the elm-tree bole are in tiny leaf,
While the chaffinch sings on the orchard bough
In England—now!
And after April, when May follows
And the white-throat builds, and all the swallows!
Hark, where my blossomed pear-tree in the hedge
Leans to the field and scatters on the clover
Blossoms and dewdrops—at the bent spray's edge—
That's the wise thrush: he sings each song twice over
Lest you should think he never could recapture
The first fine careless rapture!
And, though the fields look rough with hoary dew,
All will be gay when noontide wakes anew
The buttercups, the little children's dower
—Far brighter than this gaudy melon-flower!

Robert Browning

FLOWER o' the wood, so pure and white,
Made but for sunshine and delight,
How we all watch you 'neath the trees
Dance in the sun, sway in the breeze,
Perfect in ev'ry changing mood,
Flower o' the wood!

Flower o' the wood, did you but know
Of Autumn frost and Winter snow,
When, half-dead, lies the patient Earth,
Would you be sad and cease your mirth?
"Ah, well!" you say, "This life is good."
Flower o' the wood!

Flower o' the wood, a wind has blown
And you are dead: I am alone.
The sad grey world and weeping sky
Hear all day long my fruitless cry,
"Come back." Ah! If you only could,
Flower o' the wood!

Marie Steuart

THERE is a pleasure in the pathless woods,
There is a rapture on the lonely shore,
There is society where none intrudes,
By the deep sea, and music in its roar.

Lord Byron

WITH rakish eye and plenished crop,
Oblivious of the farmer's gun,
Upon the naked ash-tree top
The Crow sits basking in the sun.

An old ungodly rogue, I wot!
For, perched in black against the blue,
His feathers, torn with beak and shot,
Let woful glints of April through.

The year's new grass, and, golden-eyed,
The daisies sparkle underneath,
And chestnut-trees on either side
Have opened every ruddy sheath.

But doubtful still of frost and snow,
The ash alone stands stark and bare,
And on its topmost twig the Crow
Takes the glad morning's sun and air.

William Canton

THE grey-ey'd morn smiles on the frowning night,
Checkering the eastern clouds with streaks of light
And flecked darkness like a drunkard reels
From forth day's pathway, made by Titan's wheels.

Shakespeare

THROUGH weeds and thorns, and matted
underwood
I force my way, now climb, and now descend
O'er rocks, or bare or mossy, with wild foot
Crushing the purple worts; while oft unseen
Hurrying along the drifted forest-leaves
The scared snake rustles. Onward still I toil
I know not, ask not whither! A new joy,
Lovely as light, sudden as summer gust,
And gladsome as the first-born of the spring,
Beckons me on, or follows from behind,
Playmate or guide! The master-passion
quelled,
I feel that I am free. With dun-red bark
The fir-trees, and the unfrequent slender oak,
Forth from this tangle wild of bush and brake
Soar up, and form a melancholy vault
High o'er me, murmuring like a distant sea.

S. T. Coleridge

THE sea! the sea! the open sea!
The blue, the fresh, the ever free!
Without a mark, without a bound,
It runneth earth's wide region round
It plays with the clouds; it mocks the skies;
Or like a cradled creature lies.

Barry Cornwall

TO find the western path,
Right through the gates of wrath
I urge my way;
Sweet morning leads one on;
With soft repentant moan
I see the break of day.

The war of swords and spears,
Melted by dewy tears,
Exhales on high;
The sun is freed from fears,
And with soft grateful tears
Ascends the sky.

W. Blake

FAIR is the rose, yet fades with heat and cold;
Sweet are the violets, yet soon grown old:
The lily's white, yet in one day 'tis done;
White is the snow, yet melts against the sun:
So white, so sweet was my fair mistress' face,
Yet altered quite in one short hour's space:
So short-lived beauty a vain gloss doth borrow,
Breathing delight to-day, but none to-morrow.

Anon

OH, welcome calm of heart and mind!
As falls yon fir-tree's loosened rind
To leave a tenderer growth behind,

So fall the weary years away;
A child again, my head I lay
Upon the lap of this sweet day.

The western wind hath Lethean powers,
Yon noonday cloud nepenthe showers.
The lake is white with lotus-flowers!

Even Duty's voice is faint and low,
And slumberous Conscience waking slow,
Forgets her blotted scroll to show.

The Shadow which pursues us all,
Whose ever-nearing steps appal,
Whose voice we hear behind us call,—

That shadow blends with mountain gray,
It speaks but what the light waves say,—
Death walks apart from fear to-day!

Rocked on her breast, these pines and I,
Alike on Nature's love rely;
And equal seems to live or die.

Assured that He whose presence fills
With light the spaces of these hills
No evil to His creatures wills,

The simple faith remains, that He
Will do, whatever that may be,
The best alike for man and tree.

J. G. Whittier

UP with me! up with me, into the clouds!
For thy song, Lark, is strong.
Up with me! up with me, into the clouds!
Singing, singing,
With all the heavens about thee ringing.
Lift me, guide me till I find
That spot that seems so to thy mind!
I have walked through wildernesses dreary,
And to-day my heart is weary
Had I now the wings of a fairy,
Up to thee would I fly.
There is madness about thee, and joy divine
In that song of thine;
Up with me, up with me, high and high,
To thy banqueting-place in the sky!
Joyous as morning,
Thou art laughing and scorning
Thou hast a nest, for thy love and thy rest:
And, though little troubled with sloth,
Drunken Lark! thou wouldst be loth
To be such a traveller as I.
Happy, happy liver!
With a soul as strong as a mountain river,
Pouring out praise to th' Almighty Giver,
Joy and jollity be with us both!
Hearing thee, or else some other,
As merry a brother,
I on the earth will go plodding on,
By myself, cheerfully, till the day is done.

W. Wordsworth

I SAW old Autumn in the misty morn
Stand shadowless like silence, listening
To silence, for no lonely bird would sing
Into his hollow ear from woods forlorn,
Nor lowly hedge nor solitary thorn;—
Shaking his languid locks all dewy bright
With tangled gossamer that fell by night,
Pearling his coronet of golden corn.

Where are the songs of summer?—With the sun,
Oping the dusky eyelids of the south,
Till shade and silence waken up as one,
And morning sings with a warm odorous mouth.
Where are the merry birds?—Away, away,
On panting wings through the inclement skies,
Lest owls should prey
Undazzled at noon-day,
And tear with horny beak their lustrous eyes.

Where are the blooms of summer?—In the west,
Blushing their last to the last sunny hours,
When the mild eve by sudden night is prest
Like tearful Proserpine, snatched from her flow'rs
To a gloomy breast.
Where is the pride of summer,—the green prime,—
The many, many leaves all twinkling?—Three

On the mossed elm; three on the naked lime
Trembling,—and one upon the old oak tree!
Where is the Dryad's immortality?—
Gone into mournful cypress and dark yew,
And wearing the long gloomy winter through
In the smooth holly's green eternity.

T. Hood

IN my former days of bliss,
Her divine skill taught me this:
That from everything I saw
I could some invention draw,
And raise pleasure to the height,
Through the meanest object's sight.
By the murmur of a spring,
Or the least bough's rusteling
By a daisy whose leaves spread
Shut when Titan goes to bed,
Or a shady bush or tree,
She could more infuse in me
Than all Nature's beauties can
In some other wiser man. . . .
Poesy, thou sweet'st content
That e'er heav'n to mortals lent,
Though they as a trifle leave thee
Whose dull thoughts cannot conceive thee,
Though thou be to them a scorn
That to nought but earth are born,
Let my life no longer be
Than I am in love with thee.

George Wither

FOUR Seasons fill the measure of the year;
There are four seasons in the mind of Man:
He has his lusty Spring, when fancy clear
Takes in all beauty with an easy span:

He has his Summer, when luxuriously
Spring's honey'd cud of youthful thought he loves
To ruminate, and by such dreaming high
Is nearest unto heaven: quiet coves

His soul has in its Autumn, when his wings
He furleth close; contented so to look
On mists in idleness—to let fair things
Pass by unheeded as a threshold brook:—

He has his Winter too of pale misfeature,
Or else he would forgo his mortal nature.

John Keats

MAY homely plants for homely needs
And herbs of healing there be found.
Come, Love! and root up all the weeds
And make my garden holy ground.

C. E. Rowe

In Nature's Garden

AWAY, away, from men and towns,
To the wild wood and the downs—
To the silent wilderness
Where the soul need not repress
Its music, lest it should not find
An echo in another's mind,
While the touch of Nature's art
Harmonizes heart to heart.

Radiant Sister of the Day
Awake! arise! and come away!
To the wild woods and the plains,
To the pools where winter rains
Image all their roof of leaves,
Where the pine its garland weaves
Of sapless green, and ivy dun,
Round stems that never kiss the sun,
Where the lawns and pastures be
And the sandhills of the sea,
Where the melting hoar-frost wets
The daisy star that never sets,
And wind-flowers and violets
Which yet join not scent to hue
Crown the pale year weak and new;
When the night is left behind
In the deep east, dim and blind,
And the blue noon is over us,
And the multitudinous
Billows murmur at our feet,
Where the earth and ocean meet,
And all things seem only one
In the universal Sun.

P. B. Shelley

NO sooner grows
The soft infusion prevalent, and wide,
Than, all alive, at once their joy o'erflows
In music unconfined. Up springs the lark,
Shrill-voiced, and loud, the messenger of morn;
Ere yet the shadows fly, he mounted sings
Amid the dawning clouds, and from their haunts
Calls up the tuneful nations. Every copse
Deep-tangled, tree irregular, and bush
Bending with dewy moisture o'er the heads
Of the coy choristers that lodge within,
Are prodigal of harmony. The thrush
And wood-lark, o'er the kind contending throng
Superior heard, run through the sweetest length
Of notes; when listening Philomela deigns
To let them joy, and purposes, in thought
Elate, to make her night excel their day.
The blackbird whistles from the thorny brake;
The mellow bullfinch answers from the grove:
Nor are the linnets, o'er the flowering furze
Pour'd out profusely, silent. Join'd to these,
Innumerous songsters, in the freshening shade
Of new-sprung leaves, their modulations mix
Mellifluous. The jay, the rook, the daw,
And each harsh pipe, discordant heard alone,
Aid the full concert; while the stock-dove breathes
A melancholy murmur through the whole.

J. Thomson

WHERE the pools are bright and deep,
Where the grey trout lies asleep,
Up the river and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the blackbird sings the latest,
Where the hawthorn blooms the sweetest,
Where the nestlings chirp and flee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the mowers mow the cleanest,
Where the hay lies thick and greenest,
There to track the homeward bee,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Where the hazel bank is steepest,
Where the shadows fall the deepest,
Where the clustering nuts fall free,
That's the way for Billy and me.

Why the boys should drive away
Little maidens from their play,
Or love to banter and fight so well,
That's the thing I never could tell.

But this I know, I love to play
Through the meadow, among the hay;
Up the water and over the lea,
That's the way for Billy and me.

James Hogg

HAIL to thee, blithe Spirit!
Bird thou never wert,
That from heaven, or near it
Pourest thy full heart
In profuse strains of unpremeditated art.

Higher still and higher
From the earth thou springest
Like a cloud of fire;
The blue deep thou wingest,
And singing still dost soar, and soaring ever singest.

The pale purple even
Melts around thy flight;
Like a star of heaven
In the broad daylight
Thou art unseen, but yet I hear thy shrill delight:

Keen as are the arrows
Of that silver sphere,
Whose intense lamp narrows
In the white dawn clear
Until we hardly see, we feel that it is there.

All the earth and air
With thy voice is loud,
As, when night is bare,
From one lonely cloud,
The moon rains out her beams, and heaven is overflow'd.

P. B. Shelley

O, FRESH is the rose in the gay, dewy morning,
And sweet is the lily at evening close;
But in the fair presence o' lovely young Jessie,
Unseen is the lily, unheeded the rose.

Robert Burns

MINE be a cot beside the hill;
A bee-hive's hum shall soothe my ear;
A willowy brook that turns a mill,
With many a fall shall linger near.

The swallow, oft, beneath my thatch
Shall twitter from her clay-built nest;
Oft shall the pilgrim lift the latch,
And share my meal, a welcome guest.

Around my ivied porch shall spring
Each fragrant flower that drinks the dew;
And Lucy, at her wheel, shall sing
In russet-gown and apron blue.

The village-church among the trees,
Where first our marriage-vows were given,
With merry peals shall swell the breeze
And point with taper spire to Heaven.

S. Rogers

COME live with me and be my Love,
And we will all the pleasures prove
That hills and valleys, dale and field,
And all the craggy mountains yield.

There we will sit upon the rocks
And see the shepherds feed their flocks,
By shallow rivers, to whose falls
Melodious birds sing madrigals.

There will I make thee beds of roses
And a thousand fragrant posies,
A cap of flowers, and a kirtle
Embroider'd all with leaves of myrtle.

A gown made of the finest wool,
Which from our pretty lambs we pull,
Fair linèd slippers for the cold,
With buckles of the purest gold.

A belt of straw and ivy buds
With coral clasps and amber studs:
And if these pleasures may thee move,
Come live with me and be my Love.

Thy silver dishes for thy meat
As precious as the gods do eat,
Shall on an ivory table be
Prepared each day for thee and me.

The shepherd swains shall dance and sing
For thy delight each May-morning:
If these delights thy mind may move,
Then live with me and be my Love.

C. Marlowe

In Nature's Garden

HOW vainly men themselves amaze
To win the palm, the oak, or bays:
And their incessant labours see
Crowned from some single herb or tree
Whose short and narrow verged shade
Does prudently their toils upbraid;
While all the flowers and trees do close,
To weave the garlands of repose!

Fair quiet, have I found thee here,
An Innocence, thy sister dear?
Mistaken long, I sought you then
In busy companies of men.
Your sacred plants, if here below,
Only amongst the plants will grow:
Society is all but rude
To this delicious solitude.

A. Marvell

IT is the wisdom and goodness of gardening which makes it such a deep and enduring happiness. It is thankfulness, reverence, and love, which make our gardens dear to us from childhood to old age.

Dean Hole

THE age is grown too vast: a monster plan
Must herald every sounding step it takes;
No will counts singly, and pretentious man
Is nothing'd by the huge machines he makes.
I love small things—a little bird that sings,
A little flower beside a wimpling brook,
A little child with light imaginings,
A little hour lent to a thoughtful book.
But of all little things I chiefly prize,
On a lone moor, a little Highland Inn,
Where, amid misty Bens and scowling skies,
And the unsleeping torrent's sleepy din,
A little maid attends with ready smiles
The foot-worn guest, and blazing faggots piles.

J. S. Blackie

'TIS sweet to hear the watch-dog's honest bark
Bay deep-mouthed welcome as we draw near home,
'Tis sweet to know there is an eye will mark
Our coming, and look brighter when we come;
'Tis sweet to be awakened by the lark,
Or lulled by falling waters; sweet the hum
Of bees, the voice of girls, the song of birds,
The lisp of children, and their earliest words.

Lord Byron

YE stars! which are the poetry of heaven,
If in your bright leaves we would read the fate
Of men and empires,—'tis to be forgiven,
That in our aspirations to be great,
Our destinies o'erleap their mortal state,
And claim a kindred with you; for ye are
A beauty and a mystery, and create
In us such love and reverence from afar,
That fortune, fame, power, life, have named themselves a star.

All heaven and earth are still—though not in sleep
But breathless, as we grow when feeling most;
And silent, as we stand in thoughts too deep—
All heaven and earth are still. From the high host
Of stars, to the lull'd lake and mountain coast,
All is concenter'd in a life intense,
Where not a beam, nor air, nor leaf is lost,
But hath a part of being, and a sense
Of that which is of all Creator and defence.

Lord Byron

ALL hands employ'd, the royal work grows warm
Like lab'ring bees on a long summer's day,
Some sound the trumpet for the rest to swarm,
And some on bells of tasted lilies play;
With glewy wax some new foundations lay
Of virgin comb, which from the roof are hung,
Or tend the sick, or educate the young.

J. Dryden

SING to me, sing, and sing again,
My glad, great-throated nightingale:
Sing, as the good sun through the rain—
Sing, as the home-wind in the sail!

Sing to me life, and toil, and time,
O bugle of dawn, O flute of rest!
Sing, and once more, as in the prime
There shall be nought but seems the best.

And sing me at the last of love:
Sing that old magic of the May,
That makes the great world laugh and move
As lightly as our dream to-day!

W. E. Henley

IT is a natural consequence that those who cannot taste the actual fruition of a garden should take the greater delight in reading about one.

I HEARD the trailing garments of the Night
Sweep through her marble halls!
I saw her sable skirts all fringed with light
From the celestial walls.

I felt her presence, by each spell of might,
Stoop o'er me from above;
The calm, majestic presence of the Night,
As of the one I love.

I heard the sounds of sorrow and delight,
The manifold, soft chimes,
That fill the haunted chambers of the Night,
Like some old poet's rhymes.

From the cold cisterns of the midnight air
My spirit drank repose:
The fountain of perpetual peace flows there—
From those deep cisterns flows.

O holy Night; from thee I learn to bear
What man has borne before:
Thou layest thy finger on the lips of Care,
And they complain no more.

Peace! Peace! Orestes-like I breathe this prayer;
Descend with broad-winged flight,
The welcome, the thrice-prayed for, the most fair,
The best belovèd Night!

H. W. Longfellow

AS it fell upon a day
In the merry month of May,
Sitting in a pleasant shade
Which a grove of myrtles made,
Beasts did leap and birds did sing,
Trees did grow and plants did spring,
Every thing did banish moan
Save the nightingale alone.
She, poor bird, as all forlorn,
Lean'd her breast against a thorn,
And there sung the dolefullest ditty
That to hear it was a pity.
Fie, fie, fie, now would she cry;
Tereu, tereu, by and by:
That to hear her so complain
Scarce I could from tears refrain;
For her griefs so lively shown
Made me think upon mine own.
—Ah, thought I, thou mournst in vain,
None takes pity on thy pain:
Senseless trees, they cannot hear thee,
Ruthless beasts, they will not cheer thee;
King Pandion, he is dead,
All thy friends are lapp'd in lead:
All thy fellow birds do sing
Careless of thy sorrowing:
Even so, poor bird, like thee
None alive will pity me.

R. Barnefield

WITHIN a thick and spreading hawthorn bush,
That overhung a mole-hill large and round,
I heard from morn to morn a merry thrush
Sing hymns of rapture, while I drank the sound
With joy; and oft, an unintruding guest,
I watched her secret toils from day to day,
How true she warped the moss to form her nest,
And modelled it within with wool and clay.
And by-and-by, like heath-bells gilt with dew,
There lay her shining eggs as bright as flowers,
Ink-spotted over, shells of green and blue;
And there I witnessed, in the summer hours,
A brood of nature's minstrels chirp and fly,
Glad as the sunshine and the laughing sky.

J. Clare

NATURE is always willing, and constantly waiting, to fashion things of wondrous beauty. Only make habitable conditions for her children and they will come in troops, unbidden but never unwelcome to those who really love them.

Francis George Heath

ETHEREAL minstrel! pilgrim of the sky!
Dost thou despise the earth where cares abound?
Or while the wings aspire, are heart and eye
Both with thy nest upon the dewy ground,
Thy nest which thou canst drop into at will,
Those quivering wings composed, that music still!

To the last point of vision, and beyond
Mount, daring warbler!—that love-prompted strain
—'Twixt thee and thine a never failing bond—
Thrills not the less the bosom of the plain:
Yet might'st thou seem, proud privilege! to sing
All independent of the leafy Spring.

Leave to the nightingale her shady wood;
A privacy of glorious light is thine,
Whence thou dost pour upon the world a flood
Of harmony, with instinct more divine
Type of the wise, who soar, but never roam—
True to the kindred points of Heaven and Home!

W. Wordsworth

HAIL, beauteous stranger of the grove,
Thou messenger of spring;
Now Heaven repairs thy rural seat,
And woods thy welcome sing.

What time the daisy decks the green,
Thy certain voice we hear;
Hast thou a star to guide thy path,
Or mark the rolling year?

Delightful visitant, with thee
I hail the time of flowers,
And hear the sound of music sweet
From birds among the bowers.

The school-boy wandering through the wood
To pull the primrose gay,
Starts the new voice of spring to hear,
And imitates the lay.

What time the pea puts on the bloom
Thou fliest thy vocal vale,
An annual guest in other lands,
Another spring to hail.

Sweet bird, thy bower is ever green,
Thy sky is ever clear;
Thou hast no sorrow in thy song,
No winter in thy year!

O could I fly, I'd fly with thee
We'd make, with joyful wing,
Our annual visit o'er the globe,
Companions of the spring.

J. Logan

WHEN will the stream be aweary of flowing
Under my eye?
When will the wind be aweary of blowing
Over the sky?
When will the clouds be aweary of fleeting?
When will the heart be aweary of beating?
And nature die?
Never, oh! never, nothing will die;
The stream flows,
The wind blows,
The cloud fleets,
The heart beats,
Nothing will die.
Nothing will die;
All things will change
Thro' eternity.
'Tis the world's winter;
Autumn and summer
Are gone long ago;
Earth is dry to the centre,
But spring, a new comer,
A spring rich and strange,
Shall make the winds blow
Round and round,
Thro' and thro',
Here and there,
Till the air
And the ground
Shall be fill'd with life anew.

Lord Tennyson

WHAT did Spring-time whisper?
O ye rivulets
Waking from your trance so sad,
Pleased to welcome fisher-lad
With his little nets,
Speed, for summer's in the air,
Prattle, for the breeze is warm,
Chatter by the otter's lair,
Bubble past the ivied farm;
Wake the primrose on the banks,
Bid the violet ope her eyes,
Hurry in a flood of thanks
Underneath serener skies!
What a revel's coming soon—
Fairies trooping o'er the leas,
Making magic by the moon,
Crowned with wood-anemones!
What a haunted heart the thrush
Nurses in the blackthorn bush,
Full of splendid songs to sing,
Cherry welcome of the Spring—
Spring has come!

Norman Gale

WHO can paint
Like Nature? Can imagination boast
Amid its gay creation, hues like hers?

J. Thomson

THOU hearest the Nightingale begin the Song
of Spring:
The lark sitting upon his earthy bed, just as
the morn
Appears, listens silent, then springing from the
waving cornfield, loud
He leads the Choir of Day—trill, trill, trill, trill,
Mounting upon the wing of light into the Great
Expanse.
Re-echoing against the lovely blue and shining
heavenly shell,
His little throat labours with inspiration; every
feather
On throat and breast and wing vibrates with the
effluence Divine.
All Nature listens silent to him, and the awful
Sun
Stands still upon the mountain looking on this
little bird
With eyes of soft humility and wonder, love and
awe.

W. Blake

NOT oaks alone are trees, nor roses flowers;
Much humble wealth makes rich this world
of ours.

Leigh Hunt

In Nature's Garden

WHEN April sets her seal upon
The Year, and 'twixt the showers
The truant sun returns at last
To bless the budding flowers.

When skies are dappled, softest blue,
Reflects of softest gray,
And those who love the greening wood
May tread the woodland way.

When earth seems new, fresh from the hand
Of God, and strangely bright;
And winds no longer pinch or chill,
But stir us with delight.

When mating birds begin their lay,
And make the season's plans
When all are winged architects
Instead of artisans;

Then let us stray together where,
Shut out from worldly din,
We may surprise the secrets hid
The mother's heart within.

Dear Nature woos us to her breast,
Would have us babes again,
And I, for one, am ready, friend—
'Tis milk to nourish men.

William S. Lord

SWEET bird, that sing'st away the early hours,
Of winters past, or coming, void of care,
Well pleased with delights which present are,
Fair seasons, budding sprays, sweet-smelling flowers:
To rocks, to springs, to rills, from leafy bowers
Thou thy Creator's goodness dost declare,
And what dear gifts in thee he did not spare,
A stain to human sense in sin that lowers.
What soul can be so sick, which by thy songs
(Attir'd in sweetness) sweetly is not driven
Quite to forget Earth's turmoils, spites, and wrongs,
And lift a reverent eye and thought to Heaven?
Sweet, artless songster, thou my mind dost raise
To airs of spheres, yea, and to angels' lays.

William Drummond

LIFE has leaves to tread
And flowers to cherish; summer round thee glows;
Wait not till Autumn's fading robes are shed,
But while its petals still are burning red
Gather life's full-blown rose!

Oliver Wendell Holmes

HOW like the human heart, thou changeful Sea,
With thy uncertain moods; now gay and bright,
Sparkling with silver in the sun's warm light,
Now dark and sullen, as in wanton glee
The windstorm mars thy peaceful brilliancy,
Thy waters lashing with its wings of death
Till all thy bosom heaves with quick-drawn breath,
And not a wave is from its fury free !

Inconstant Sea ! in whom we all may trace
The varied feelings that in us find place;
Our rage, our gentleness, our frowns, our smiles,
As Love or Passion battles for our will,
Yet whether Sorrow moves or Joy beguiles,
Like thee how rich a source of good and ill !

Oswald Norman

AT all times and in all ages gardens have been amongst the objects of the greatest interest to mankind, and the gardener's art has contributed to the delight of all men in their time.

Charles Dickens

THE groundflame of the crocus breaks the mould,
Fair Spring slides hither o'er the Southern sea,
Wavers on her thin stem the snowdrop cold
That trembles not to kisses of the bee:
Come, Spring, for now from all the dripping eaves
The spear of ice has wept itself away,
And hour by hour unfolding woodbine leaves
O'er his uncertain shadow droops the day.
She comes! The loosen'd rivulets run;
The frost-bead melts upon her golden hair;
Her mantle, slowly greening in the Sun,
Now wraps her close, now arching leaves her bare
To breaths of balmier air;
Up leaps the lark, gone wild to welcome her,
About her glance the tits, and shriek the jays,
Before her skims the jubilant woodpecker,
The linnet's bosom blushes at her gaze,
While round her brows a woodland culver flits,
Watching her large light eyes and gracious looks,
And in her open palm a halcyon sits
Patient—the secret splendour of the brooks.
Come, Spring! She comes on waste and wood,
On farm and field; but enter also here,
Diffuse thyself at will thro' all my blood,
And, tho' thy violet sicken into sere,
Lodge with me all the year!

Lord Tennyson

In Nature's Garden

THOU perceivest the Flowers put forth their precious Odours,
And none can tell how from so small a centre comes such sweet,
Forgetting that within that Center Eternity expands
Its ever-during doors, that Og and Anak fiercely guard.
First, the morning breaks, joy opens in the flower bosoms,
Joy even to tears, which the Sun rising dries; first the Wild Thyme
And Meadow-sweet, downy and soft, waving among the reeds,
Light springing in the air, lead the sweet Dance; they wake
The Honeysuckle sleeping on the Oak, the flaunting beauty
Revels along upon the wind; the White-thorn lovely May
Opens her many lovely eyes; listening, the Rose still sleeps.
None dare to wake her. Soon she bursts her crimson-curtained bed
And comes forth in the majesty of beauty; every Flower—
The Pink, the Jessamine, the Wallflower, the Carnation,
The Jonquil, the mild Lily opes her heavens; every Tree
And Flower and Herb soon fill the air with an innumerable Dance,
Yet all in order sweet and lovely. . . .

W. Blake

WHAT of the land, and what of the sea,
And what of the sky bending over?
What is the message they're bringing to thee
In language of cloud, wave and clover?

The cloud melts and scatters, and lost in the sea
Is the wave in its mighty endeavour;
The sweets of the clover belong to the bee,
But sea, land, and sky are forever.

William S. Lord

THOU art a miser, thou busy busy bee,
Late and early at employ;
Still on thy golden stores intent,
Thy summer in reaping and hoarding is spent
What thy winter will never enjoy:
What lesson this for me, thou busy busy bee!

Little dost thou think, thou busy busy bee,
What is the end of thy toil,
When the latest flowers of the ivy are gone,
And all thy work for the year is done,
Thy master comes for the spoil:
Woe then for thee, thou busy busy bee!

R. Southey

A LITTLE sun, a little rain,
A soft wind blowing from the west—
And woods and fields are sweet again
And warmth within the mountain's breast.

So simple is the earth we tread,
So quick with love and life her frame,
Ten thousand years have dawned and fled,
And still her magic is the same.

A little love, a little trust,
A soft impulse, a sudden dream,—
And life as dry as desert dust
Is fresher than a mountain stream.

So simple is the heart of man,
So ready for new hope and joy;
Ten thousand years since it began
Have left it younger than a boy.

Stopford A. Brooke

AND from the knotted flowers of thyme
When the woodland banks are deck't,
See the bee his load collect;
Mark him turn the petals by,
Gold-dust gathering on his thigh,
As full many a hum he heaves,
While he pats th' intruding leaves
Lost in many a heedless spring,
Then wearing home on weary wing.

J. Clare

I SAID this morning, as I leaned and threw
My shutters open to the Spring's surprise,
'Tell me, O Earth, how is it that in you
Year after year the same fresh feelings rise?
How do you keep your young exultant glee?
No more those sweet emotions come to me.

'I note through all your fissures, how the tide
Of healthful life goes leaping as of old.
Your royal dawns retain their pomp and pride;
Your sunsets lose no atom of their gold.
How can this wonder be?' My soul's fine ear
Leaned, listening, till a small voice answered near—

'My days lapse never over into night;
My nights encroach not on the rights of dawn.
I rush not breathless after some delight;
I waste no grief for any pleasure gone.
My July noons burn not the entire year.
Heart, hearken well!' Yes, yes; go on; I hear.

'I do not strive to make my sunsets' gold
Pave all the dim and distant realms of space.
I do not bid my crimson dawns unfold
To lend the midnight a fictitious grace.
I break no law, for all God's laws are good,
Heart, hast thou heard?' Yes, yes, and understood!

Ella Wheeler Wilcox

THICK lies the mist o'er woodland, hill and dale,
Hiding the landscape's beauty from our sight,
As if an imp had spread the pall of night
While yet 'tis day, so that without avail
The Spring has decked the banks with primrose pale,
And set the lawns ablaze with crocus bright,
If we forget that, once dispelled this blight
Of darkness, glorious sunshine will not fail.

So when at times the mist of Doubt obscures
The vision of our souls, till they can see
Nor plan, nor beauty in Life's harmony,
Our hearts should feel, armed with a faith devout,
That 'neath the gloom, however dark, of Doubt,
The sun of Heaven's controlling love endures.

Oswald Norman

ON hanging cobwebs shone the dew,
And thick the wayside clovers grew,
The feeding bee had much to do,
So fast did honey-drops exude;
She sucked and murmured, and was gone,
And lit on other blooms anon,
The while I learned a lesson on
The source and sense of gratitude.

Jean Ingelow

THE ways are green with the gladdening sheen
Of the young year's fairest daughter.
O, the shadows that fleet o'er the springing wheat!
O, the magic of running water!
The spirit of spring is in everything,
The banners of spring are streaming,
We march to a tune from the fifes of June,
And life's a dream worth dreaming.

It's all very well to sit and spell
At the lesson there's no gainsaying;
But what the deuce are wont and use
When the whole mad world's a-maying?
When the meadow glows, and the orchard snows,
And the air's with love-motes teeming,
When fancies break, and the senses wake,
O, life's a dream worth dreaming.

What Nature has writ with her lusty wit
Is worded so wisely and kindly
That whoever has dipped in her manuscript
Must up and follow her blindly.
Now the summer prime is her blithest rhyme
In the being and the seeming,
And they that have heard the overword
Know life's a dream worth dreaming.

W. E. Henley

THE stately homes of England,
How beautiful they stand,
Amidst their tall ancestral trees,
O'er all the pleasant land!
The deer across their greensward bound,
Through shade and sunny gleam;
And the swan glides past them with the sound
Of some rejoicing stream.

The blessed homes of England!
How softly on their bowers
Is laid the holy quietness
That breathes from Sabbath hours!
Solemn, yet sweet, the church-bell's chime
Floats through their woods at morn;
All other sounds, in that still time,
Of breeze and leaf are born.

The free fair homes of England!
Long, long, in hut and hall,
May hearts of native proof be reared
To guard each hallowed wall!
And green for ever be the groves,
And bright the flowery sod,
Where first the child's glad spirit loves
Its country and its God!

Felicia Hemans

MOUNTAIN gorses, ever golden,
Cankered not the whole year long!
Do ye teach us to be strong,
Howsoever pricked and holden
Like your thorny bloom, and so
Trodden on by rain and snow,
Up the hillside of this life, as bleak as where ye grow?

Mountain blossoms, shining blossoms,
Do ye teach us to be glad
When no summer can be had,
Blooming in our inward bosoms?
Ye, whom God preserveth still,
Set as lights upon a hill,
Tokens to the wintry earth that Beauty liveth still!

Mountain gorses, do ye teach us
From that academic chair
Canopied with azure air,
That the wisest word man reaches
Is the humblest he can speak?
Ye, who live on mountain peak,
Yet live low along the ground, beside the grasses meek!

Mountain gorses, since Linnæus
Knelt beside you on the sod,
For your beauty thanking God,—
For your teaching, ye should see us

Bowing in prostration new!
Whence arisen,—if one or two
Drops be on our cheeks—O world, they are not
tears but dew.

E. B. Browning

FLOWER in the crannied wall,
I pluck you out of the crannies,
I hold you here, root and all, in my hand,
Little flower—but if I could understand
What you are, root and all, and all in all,
I should know what God and man is.

Lord Tennyson

FOR the tender beech and the sapling oak,
That grow by the shadowy rill,
You may cut down both at a single stroke,
You may cut down which you will.

But this you may know, that as long as they
grow,
Whatever change may be,
You never can teach either oak or beech
To be aught but a greenwood tree.

T. L. Peacock

SHOULD stormy wind or thunder-shower
Assail thy web; in evil hour
Should ruthless hand of lynx-eyed boy,
Or the prim gardener's rake destroy
The clever mathematic maze
Thou spreadest in our garden ways,
No vain repinings mar thy rest,
No idle sorrows fill thy breast.

Thou mayest perchance deplore thy lot,
Or sigh that fortune love thee not;
But never dost thou sulk and mope,
Or lie and groan, forgetting hope;
Still, with a patience calm and true,
Thou workest all thy work anew,
As if thou felt that Heaven is just
To every creature of the dust.

And that the Providence, whose plan
Gives life to spiders as to man,
Will ne'er accord its aid divine
To those who lazily repine.

C. Mackay

NATURE never did betray
The heart that loved her: 'tis her privilege
Through all the scenes of this our life to lead
From joy to joy.

W. Wordsworth

WE heard it calling, clear and low
That tender April morn; we stood
And listened in the quiet wood,
We heard it, ay, long years ago.

It came, and with a strange, sweet cry,
A friend, but from a far-off land;
We stood and listened, hand in hand,
And heart to heart, my Love and I.

In dreamland then we found our joy,
And so it seem'd as 'twere the Bird
That Helen in old times had heard
At noon beneath the oaks of Troy.

O time far off, and yet so near!
It came to her in that hush'd grove,
It warbled while the wooing throve,
It sang the song she loved to hear.

And now I hear its voice again,
And still its message is of peace,
It sings of love that will not cease—
For me it never sings in vain.

Frederick Locker Lampson

FOR amid the sunny hour,
When I've found thee on a flower
(Searching with minutest gleg)
Oft I've seen thy little leg
Soft as glass o'er velvet glides
Smoothen down thy silken sides;
Then thy wings would ope and shut,
Then thou seemingly wouldst strut;
Was it nature, was it pride?
Let the learned world decide.

J. Clare

WHERE the cherry spreads its flowery tufts,
'Tis pleasure to survey the snowy pomp,
And pause in contemplation of the hum
Of mingled bees industrious, that invade
And rifle in succession every flower;
Some large and gifted with the voice profound
Of mellow bass, some with the loftier pipe
Of tenor soft, of small soprano some,
That fancy oft may deem she hears distinct,
The sweet coincidence of fellow-tones
Producing harmony's full chord divine.

J. Hurdis

MYSTERIOUS Night! when our first parent knew
Thee from report divine, and heard thy name,
Did he not tremble for this lovely frame,
This glorious canopy of light and blue?
Yet 'neath a curtain of translucent dew,
Bathed in the rays of the great setting flame,
Hesperus with the host of heaven came,
And lo! creation widened in man's view.
Who could have thought such darkness lay concealed,
Within thy beams, O sun! or who could find,
Whilst fly, and leaf, and insect stood revealed,
That to such countless orbs thou mad'st us blind!
Why do we then shun Death with anxious strife?
If light can thus deceive, wherefore not life?

Blanco White

THE world is too much with us; late and soon,
Getting and spending, we lay waste our powers;
Little we see in Nature that is ours;
We have given our hearts away, a sordid boon!

W. Wordsworth

THESE are thy glorious works, Parent of good,
Almighty, thine this universal frame,
This wondrous fair; Thyself how wondrous then!
Unspeakable, who sit'st above these heavens
To us invisible or dimly seen
In these thy lowest works; yet these declare
Thy goodness beyond thought, and power divine:
Speak ye, who best can tell, ye Sons of Light,
Angels, for ye behold him, and with songs
And choral symphonies, day without night,
Circle his throne rejoicing—ye in Heav'n;
On Earth join all ye Creatures, to extol
Him first, him last, him midst, and without end.
Fairest of Stars, last in the train of Night,
If better thou belong not to the Dawn,
Sure pledge of day, that crown'st the smiling morn
With thy bright circlet, praise him in thy sphere
While day arises, that sweet hour of prime.
Thou Sun, of this great World both eye and soul,
Acknowledge him thy greater; sound his praise
In thy eternal course, both when thou climb'st,
And when high moon hast gain'd, and when thou fall'st.

J. Milton

FLOW down, cold rivulet, to the sea,
Thy tribute wave deliver:
No more by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Flow, softly flow, by lawn and lea,
A rivulet then a river:
No where by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

But here will sigh thine alder-tree,
And here thine aspen shiver;
And here by thee will hum the bee,
For ever and for ever.

A thousand suns will stream on thee,
A thousand moons will quiver;
But not by thee my steps shall be,
For ever and for ever.

Lord Tennyson

THE culture of flowers is to teach love. Gardens, however small, cannot be gay without flowers, so let those who have give to those who have not—a handy maxim which everyone can digest at will.

Dudley Warner

BUT lo, what think you; suddenly
The rain and the wind ceased, and the sky
Received at once the full fruition
Of the moon's consummate apparition.
The black cloud barricade was riven,
Ruined beneath her feet, and driven
Deep in the West; while bare and breathless,
North and South and East lay ready
For a glorious thing that, dauntless, deathless,
Sprang across them and stood steady.
'Twas a moon-rainbow, vast and perfect,
From heaven to heaven extending, perfect
As the mother-moon's self, full in face,
It rose distinctly at the base
With its severe proper colours chorded
Which still in the rising, were compressed,
Until at last they coalesced,
And supreme the spectral creature lorded
In a triumph of whitest white,—
Above which intervened the night.
But above night too, like only the next,
The second of a wondrous sequence.
Reaching in rare and rarer frequence,
Till the heaven of heavens were circumflexed.
Another rainbow rose, a mightier,
Fainter, flushier, and flightier,—
Rapture dying along its verge.
Oh, whose foot shall I see emerge,
Whose, from the straining topmost dark,
On to the keystone of that arc?

R. Browning

TO-NIGHT the winds begin to rise
And roar from yonder dropping day:
The last red leaf is whirl'd away,
The rooks are blown about the skies;

The forest crack'd, the waters curl'd,
The cattle huddled on the lea;
And wildly dash'd on tower and tree
The sunbeam strikes along the world:

And but for fancies, which aver
That all thy motions gently pass
Athwart a plane of molten glass,
I scarce could brook the strain and stir

That makes the barren branches loud;
And but for fear it is not so,
The wild unrest that lives in woe
Would dote and pore on yonder cloud

That rises upward always higher,
And onward drags a labouring breast,
And topples round the dreary west,
A looming bastion fringed with fire.

Lord Tennyson

ALL is silent in the garden
Through the golden afternoon,
Only bees about the lilies
Hum a soft and drowsy tune.

H. M. Burnside

DAY!
Faster and more fast,
O'er night's brim, day boils at last;
Boils, pure gold, o'er the cloud-cup's brim
Where spurting and suppressed it lay.
For not a froth-flake touched the rim
Of yonder gap in the solid gray
Of the eastern cloud, an hour away;
But forth one wavelet, then another, curled,
Till the whole sunrise, not to be suppressed,
Rose, reddened, and its seething breast
Flickered in bounds, grew gold, then overflowed the world.

R. Browning

SHUT not so soon; the dull-eyed night
Has not as yet begun
To make a seizure on the light,
Or to seal up the Sun.

No Marigolds yet closèd are;
No shadows great appear;
Nor doth the early Shepherd's Star
Shine like a spangle here.

Stay but till my Julia close
Her life-begetting eye;
And let the whole world then dispose
Itself to live or die.

Robert Herrick

WHERE rose the mountains, there to him were friends;
Where roll'd the ocean, thereon was his home;
Where a blue sky, and glowing clime, extends,
He had the passion and the power to roam;
The desert, forest, cavern, breaker's foam,
Were unto him companionship; they spake
A mutual language, clearer than the tome
Of his land's tongue, which he would oft forsake
For Nature's pages glass'd by sunbeams on the lake.

Lord Byron

THE elm lets fall its leaves before the frost,
The very oak grows shivering and sere,
The trees are barren when the summer's lost:
But one tree keeps its goodness all the year.
Green pine, unchanging as the days go by,
Thou art thyself beneath whatever sky:
My shelter from all winds, my own strong pine,
'Tis spring, 'tis summer, still, while thou art mine.

Augusta Webster

WE are the sweet Flowers,
Born of sunny showers,
Think, whene'er you see us, what our beauty saith:
Utterance mute and bright
Of some unknown delight,
We fill the air with pleasure, by our simple breath:
All who see us, love us;
We befit all places;
Unto sorrow we give smiles; and unto graces, graces.

Mark our ways, how noiseless
All, and sweetly voiceless,
Though the March winds pipe to make our passage clear;
Not a whisper tells
Where our small seed dwells,
Nor is known the moment green, when our tips appear.
We thread the earth in silence,
In silence build our bowers,
And leaf by leaf in silence show, till we laugh atop, sweet Flowers.

Who shall say that flowers
Dress not heaven's own bowers?
Who its love, without them, can fancy—or sweet floor?

Who shall even dare
To say we sprang not there,
And came not down that Love might bring one piece of heaven the more?
Oh pray believe that angels
From those blue dominions
Brought us in their white laps down, 'twixt their golden pinions.

Leigh Hunt

IN my Autumn garden I was fain
To mourn among my scattered roses;
Alas for that last rosebud which uncloses
To Autumn's languid sun and rain
When all the world is on the wane!
Which has not felt the sweet constraint of June,
Nor heard the nightingale in tune.

Broad-faced asters by my garden-walk,
You are but coarse compared with roses:
More choice, more dear, that rosebud which uncloses
Faint-scented, pinched, upon its stalk,
That least and last which cold winds balk;
A rose it is though least and last of all,
A rose to me though at the fall.

Christina C. Rossetti

O AUTUMN, laden with fruit, and stained
With the blood of the grape, pass not, but sit
Beneath my shady roof; there thou may'st rest,
And tune thy jolly voice to my fresh pipe.
And all the daughters of the year shall dance!
Sing now the lusty song of fruits and flowers.

'The narrow bud opens her beauties to
The sun, and love runs in her thrilling veins;
Blossoms hang round the brows of Morning, and
Flourish down the bright cheek of modest Eve,
Till clust'ring Summer breaks forth into singing,
And feathered clouds strew flowers round her head.

'The Spirits of the Air live on the smells
Of fruit; and Joy, with pinions light, roves round
The gardens, or sits singing in the trees,'
Thus sang the jolly Autumn as he sat;
Then rose, girded himself, and o'er the bleak
Hills fled from our sight: but left his golden load.

W. Blake

MY heart shall be thy garden. Come, my own,
Into thy garden; thine be happy hours
Among my fairest thoughts, my tallest flowers,
From root to crowning petal, thine alone.

Thine is the place from where the seeds are sown
Up to the sky enclosed, with all its showers.
But ah, the birds, the birds! Who shall build bowers
To keep these thine? O friend, the birds have flown.

For as these come and go, and quit our pine
To follow the sweet season, or, new-comers,
Sing one song only from our alder-trees,
My heart has thoughts, which, though thine eyes hold mine,
Flit to the silent world and other summers,
With wings that dip beyond the silver seas.

Alice Meynell

THE bee through many a garden roves,
And hums his lay of courtship o'er;
But when he finds the flower he loves,
He settles there and hums no more.

T. Moore

OH the grave and gloomy quiet at the closing of the day!
When the sun has long gone down,
Not in splendours of his own,
But behind a veil of vapour vaguely vanishing away;
With a wraith of filmy cloud,
Creased and wrinkled, to enshroud
All the glow that he should give us at the closing of the day.

Oh the stern and stolid quiet at the closing of the day!
When the purple furrows gleam
Cold and steely, and the team
Loiters homeward, and the hawthorn blooms in blood-drops, not in may;
When the harvest months are done,
And the autumn rains begun,
And the black earth reeks with odours, at the closing of the day.

Oh the dim and solemn quiet at the closing of the day!
When the leaves are dropping slow,
And the wet birds come and go
Through the hedges, and white winter is already on its way;
When the smoke of smouldering tares,
Loosely borne on lagging airs,
Frets the nostrils with its savour, at the closing of the day.

Oh the grim and ghostly quiet at the closing
of the day!
When the cattle cease to move,
And the trees stand close, above,
And the mounds about the churchyard lie un-
shadow'd in the grey;
When the soul that dwells alone
Finds a sadness like its own
In the heart of Mother Nature, at the closing of
the day.

Arthur J. Munby

FROM some bright cloudlet dropping;
From branch to blossom hopping;
Then drinking from a small brown stone
That stood alone
Amid the brook; then singing,
Upspringing,
It soared: my bird had flown.

A glimpse of beauty only
That left the glen more lonely?
Nay, truly; for its song and flight
Made earth more bright!
If men were less regretful
And fretful,
Would life yield less delight?

William Canton

HERE by the sunless Lake there is no air,
Yet with how ceaseless motion, with how strange
Flowing and fading, do the high Mists range
The gloomy gorges of the Mountains bare.
Some weary breathing never ceases there,—
The ashen peaks can feel it hour by hour;
The purple depths are darken'd by its power;
A soundless breath, a trouble all things share
That feel it come and go. See! onward swim
The ghostly Mists, from silent land to land,
From gulf to gulf; now the whole air grows dim—
Like living men, darkling a space, they stand.
But lo! a Sunbeam, like a Cherubim,
Scatters them onward with a flaming brand.

Robert Buchanan

AS the chameleon, who is known
To have no colours of his own,
But borrows from his neighbour's hue
His white or black, his green or blue,
And struts as much in ready light,
Which credit gives him upon sight,
As if the rainbow were in tail
Settled on him and his heirs male.

M. Prior

ALL good abides with him who waiteth *wisely;* we shall sooner overtake the dawn by remaining here than by hurrying over the hills of the west. Be assured that every man's success is in proportion to his *average* ability. The meadow flowers spring and bloom where the waters annually deposit their slime, not where they reach a freshlet only. A man is not his hope, nor his despair, nor yet his past deed. We know not yet what we have done, still less what we are doing. Wait till evening, and other parts of our work will shine than we had thought that noon, and we shall discover the real purport of our toil. As when the farmer has reached the end of the furrow and looks back, he can tell best where the pressed earth shines most.

Thoreau

FIRST, April, she with mellow showers
Opens the way for early flowers;
Then after her comes smiling May,
In a more rich and sweet array;
Next enters June, and brings us more
Gems than those two that went before;
Then (lastly) July comes, and she
More wealth brings in than all those three.

Robert Herrick

SO dangles o'er the brook, depending low
The spider artist, till propitious breeze
Buoy him athwart the stream: from shore to shore
He fastens his horizontal thread,
Sufficient bridge, and, traversing alert,
His fine spun radii flings from side to side,
Shapes his concentric circles without art,
And, all accomplish'd, couches in the midst,
Himself the centre of his flimsy toils.

J. Hurdis

A GARDEN is a beautiful book. Every flower and every leaf is a letter. You have only to learn them—and he is a poor dunce that cannot, if he will, do that—to learn them and join them, and then go on reading and reading, and you will find yourself carried away from earth by the beautiful story you are going through. You do not know what beautiful thoughts grow out of the ground and seem to talk to a man. And then there are some flowers that seem to me like over-dutiful children: tend them ever so little, and they come up and flourish, and show us, as I may say, their bright and happy faces.

Phil Robinson

THE poetry of earth is never dead:
When all the birds are faint with the hot sun,
That is the Grasshopper's—he takes the lead
In summer luxury,—he has never done
With his delights; for when tired out with fun
He rests at ease beneath some pleasant weed.
The poetry of earth is ceasing never:
On a lone winter evening, when the frost
Has wrought a silence, from the stove there shrills
The Cricket's song, in warmth increasing ever,
And seems to one in drowsiness half lost,
The Grasshopper's among some grassy hills.

John Keats

IT is not growing like a tree
In bulk doth make Man better be;
Or standing long an oak, three hundred year,
To fall a log at last, dry, bald, and sere;
A lily of a day
Is fairer far in May,
Although it fall and die that night—
It was the plant and flower of Light.
In small proportions we just beauties see;
And in short measures life may perfect be.

Ben Jonson

THE fireflies played around the pillared stems,
And bore about their lanterns of green light,
Advancing and receding while the eye
Measured by them the depth of sylvan gloom.

F. W. Faber

HIS praise ye Winds, that from four quarters blow,
Breathe soft or loud; and wave your tops, ye Pines,
With every Plant, in sign of worship wave.
Fountains and ye that warble as ye flow,
Melodious murmurs, warbling tune his praise.
Joyn voices all ye living souls. Ye Birds,
That singing up to Heaven's-gate ascend,
Bear on your wings and in your notes his praise;
Ye that in waters glide, and ye that walk
The earth, and stately tread, or lowly creep,
Witness if *I* be silent, morn or even,
To hill, or valley, fountain, or fresh shade
Made vocal by my song, and taught his praise.
Hail, universal Lord; be bounteous still
To give us only good; and, if the night
Have gathered aught of evil or concealed,
Disperse it, as now light dispels the dark.

John Milton

"SO then believe that every bird that sings,
And every flower that stars the elastic sod,
And every thought the happy summer brings
To the pure spirit is a word of God."

S. T. Coleridge

OF this fair volume which we World do name
If we the sheets and leaves could turn with care,
Of him who it corrects, and did it frame,
We clear might read the art and wisdom rare:

Find out his power which wildest powers doth tame,
His providence extending everywhere,
His justice which proud rebels doth not spare,
In every page, no period of the same.

But silly we, like foolish children, rest
Well pleased with colour'd vellum, leaves of gold,
Fair dangling ribbands, leaving what is best,
On the great writer's sense ne'er taking hold;

Or if by chance we stay our minds on aught,
It is some picture on the margin wrought.

W. Drummond

THANKS to the human heart by which we live,
Thanks to its tenderness, its joys and fears
To me the meanest flower that blows can give
Thoughts that do often lie too deep for tears.

W. Wordsworth

SPRING, the sweet Spring, is the year's pleasant king;
Then blooms each thing, then maids dance in a ring,
Cold doth not sting, the pretty birds do sing—
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The palm and may make country houses gay,
Lambs frisk and play, the shepherds pipe all day,
And we hear aye birds tune this merry lay—
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!

The fields breathe sweet, the daisies kiss our feet,
Young lovers meet, old wives a-sunning sit,
In every street these tunes our ears do greet—
Cuckoo, jug-jug, pu-we, to-witta-woo!
Spring, the sweet Spring!

Thomas Nashe

BUT when glad summer at the west wind's call
Shall send the flocks to woods and pastures free
There 'neath the star of dawn on the cool fields
Let browse thy sheep and goats, while morn is young,
And the fresh dew lies hoary on the grass—
The dew on tender blade to cattle dear.
When the fourth hour of day brings parching thirst,
And in the trees cicala's notes are loud,
Then 'mid the herd at wells and deep clear pools
Drink the stream running from full open troughs.

Virgil

THE bee observe,
She too an artist is, and laughs at man,
Who calls on rules the sightly hexagon
With truth to form, a cunning architect,
Who at the roof begins her golden work,
And builds without foundation. How she toils,
And still from bud to bud, from flow'r to flow'r,
Travails the livelong day.

J. Hurdis

LITTLE inmate full of mirth,
Chirping on my humble hearth,
Wheresoe'er be thy abode,
Always harbinger of good.

Though in voice and shape may be,
Form'd as if akin to thee,
Thou surpassest, happier far,
Happiest grasshoppers that are;

Theirs is but a Summer song,
Thine endures the Winter long,
Unimpair'd, and shrill, and clear,
Melody throughout the year.

Neither night nor dawn of day
Puts a period to thy lay.

Charlotte Smith

AND you may have the lily
With all her virgin snows,
And you may have the beauty
That blushes on the rose;
But I will have the heart's-ease,
The dearest flower that blows!

Anon

SMALL, viewless aeronaut, that by the line
Of gossamer suspended, in mid-air
Float'st on a sunbeam. Living atom, where
Ends thy breeze-guided voyage? With what design
In æther dost thou launch thy form minute,
Mocking the eye? Alas, before the veil
Of dense clouds shall hide thee, the pursuit
Of the keen swift may end thy fairy sail.

Charlotte Smith

IF they to whom God gives fair gardens knew
The happy solace which sweet flowers bestow;
Where pain depresses, and where friends are few,
To cheer the heart in weariness and woe.

If they could see the smile which dries the tear,
The new light glistening in the languid eyes,
The thin, white hand which clasps the gift so dear,
With words of welcome and of glad surprise.

Anon

WE wandered to the pine-forest
That skirts the ocean foam
The lightest wind was in its nest,
The tempest in its home;
The whispering waves were half asleep,
The clouds were gone to play,
And on the bosom of the deep
The smile of Heaven lay;
It seemed as if the hour were one
Sent from beyond the skies,
Which scattered from above the sun
A light of Paradise.

P. B. Shelley

THE violet in the wood, that's sweet to-day,
Is longer sweet than roses of red June;
Set me sweet violets along my way,
And bid the red rose flower, but not too soon.
Ah violet, ah rose, why not the two?
Why bloom not all fair flowers the whole year through?
Why not the two, young violet, ripe rose?
Why dies one sweetness when another blows?

Augusta Webster

BLACK ants in teams come dark'ning all the the road,
Some call to march and some to lift the load:
They strain, they labour with incessant pains,
Press'd by the cumbrous weight of single grains.
The flies, struck silent, gaze with wonder down;
The busy burghers reach their earthly town,
There lay the burthens of a wintry store,
And thence unwearied part in search of more.

T. Parnell

REST is not idleness, and to lie sometimes on the grass under the trees on a summer's day, listening to the murmur of water, or watching the clouds float across the sky, is by no means waste of time.

Lord Avebury

THE country blooms—a garden . . .
To me more dear, congenial to my heart,
One native charm, than all the gloss of art!
Spontaneous joys, where Nature has its play,
The soul adopts, and owns their firstborn sway!

O. Goldsmith

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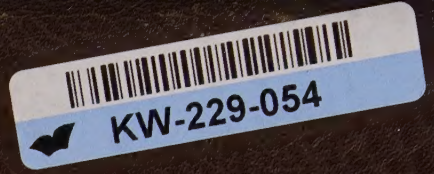
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